

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning  
teachers: The influence of differentiated employment  
experience on the development of competency in teaching

by

Marilyn Pietsch

B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., M.Ed. Admin., A. Mus. A., ATCL, LTCL

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Volume 1

University of Tasmania

January 2011

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of the my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

Marilyn Pietsch

## AUTHORITY OF ACCESS

This thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1968*.

Marilyn Pietsch

## STATEMENT OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

Marilyn Pietsch

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the many people who have given support, critical appraisal and friendship throughout this journey.

To the beginning teachers who shared their professional lives with me, my thanks and appreciation for your openness and your preparedness to reflect on the pleasures and the difficulties of your own journeys.

I have enjoyed and benefited from the friendship of the many students who have shared the Research Higher Degree study rooms, and their local and international perspectives on education have been a great source of interest and learning. Thank you to my new colleagues at Charles Sturt University who have encouraged me as I made the move from the world of schools to that of the university and in doing so, saw the completion of this project in a new light.

Professor John Williamson has been far more than my supervisor throughout this project. As my mentor in the world of academic study he has encouraged me to present my work on a public stage far earlier than I believed possible and in doing so has encouraged me in its worth. He has offered timely advice from a wealth of knowledge and wisdom and his capacity to reveal the next step along the way has been the means to my persistence. My appreciation for his contribution to my learning is beyond words.

My thanks go to all my family for their encouragement and support. To Bruce, my husband, and constant and loving companion along the way in this as in so much else, thank you for being there for me as we returned to study together and made Launceston our second home.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

Term	Explanation
Accreditation	An in-school process of meeting the Professional Teaching Standards set by the NSW Institute of Teachers for accreditation and registration. The process takes 12-18 months and requires significant continuing teaching with the support of a school-appointed mentor/supervisor.
Casual teacher	Qualified teachers who take day-to-day teaching appointments, usually to replace permanent teachers who are absent or participating in other activities. Casual teachers are paid a daily rate, which is <del>loaded</del> to include a component for sick leave and vacation pay.
Central school (CS)	These schools are usually located in isolated areas of NSW, have small numbers of students and both primary and secondary staff, and cater for students from Kindergarten to Year 12.
Consultants	Teachers with recognised expertise in specific curriculum areas who were based in District Offices on short term contracts with the responsibility for supporting teachers in the development of knowledge, understandings and pedagogical skills in their curriculum area.
Department of Education and Training (DET)	The New South Wales Department of Education and Training coordinates all public education and training services in the state of New South Wales.
District / District Superintendent (DS) /District Office	At the time of the study, the DET was divided into forty administrative districts, each of about 50 schools and each managed by a District Superintendent located in a District Office.
HSIE	The abbreviation for the Key Learning Area called Human Society and its Environment.

Term	Explanation
Integration	Students with disabilities are enrolled into mainstream classes and assisted by the presence of additional support staff whose role is to assist teacher and child to deal with differentiation of curriculum tasks.
Internship	In New South Wales, teacher education students in primary courses undertake an extended period of teaching practice in schools (up to ten weeks). During this period they have responsibility for teaching a class of students with the support of a school-based mentor but without the active intervention in the classroom of a supervising teacher.
KLA	The abbreviation for Key Learning Area which is used to designate the six learning areas into which the NSW primary school curriculum is divided and for each of which there is a separate mandatory syllabus. They include English, Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts, and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.
New South Wales (NSW)	One of the eight states and territories which comprise the Commonwealth of Australia.
Practicum	During teacher education courses, teachers were required to complete a <del>practicum</del> or <del>professional experience</del> subject each year. This involved supervised teaching on a variety of classes with increasing responsibility as students progressed in their course.
Priority Employment Program (PEP)	This staffing initiative by the DET provided opportunity for casual teachers to apply for a limited number of advertised classroom positions. It was discontinued in 2003.

Term	Explanation
Permanent teacher	A teacher appointed to the NSW DET and to a specified teaching position in a school. Permanency guarantees security of tenure for the remainder of a teacher's working life within the Department (although not necessarily within the given school).
Public school (PS)	Schools administered by the NSW Department of Education and Training and funded by the NSW state government. Primary schools in NSW are designated as "Public Schools" and enrol children from Kindergarten to Year 6.
"Targeted graduate"	Formally known as "graduate recruits", these teachers are selected for priority employment based on academic results, performance in practicums, the presentation of a curriculum vitae and an interview. Approximately 1000 recruits were "targeted" each year in 2002-3 through this process; 400-500 each year were appointed to vacant positions in schools.
Teacher education course (pre-service course)	Teacher education is the responsibility of universities who provide undergraduate and postgraduate programs of teacher preparation for primary and secondary teachers. The most common preparation for primary teachers is a four year Bachelor of Education degree from a university.
Temporary teacher	A non-permanent teacher who is appointed to a school for a maximum period of one year. Teachers may be employed in a full-time position for four weeks or more or a part-time position of one to four days per week for two terms or more. Temporary teachers are entitled to most of the entitlements of permanent teachers, including salary, on a pro-rata basis.
Teachers Employment Priority Scheme (TEPS)	This scheme provides benefits that may assist casual teachers in gaining an offer of permanent



Term	Explanation
Year of schooling	<p>employment more quickly. Depending on the schools in which a teacher works, priority for employment may be accelerated by up to 18 months for every 50 days of casual or temporary service in New South Wales public schools.</p> <p>In NSW age-based grades are designated as Years. The first year of schooling in NSW is called Kindergarten followed by Year 1 to Year 6. Children enter Kindergarten at a minimum age of 4 years and 7 months and a maximum age of 6 years.</p>

## CONTENTS

Declaration of Originality .....	ii
Authority of Access .....	iii
Statement of Ethical Conduct .....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	v
Glossary of Terms Used .....	vi
Contents .....	x
List of Tables .....	xxiii
List of Figures .....	xxvi
Abstract .....	xxvii
Chapter 1 Introduction .....	1
Context and Background .....	1
Research Aim and Impetus for Research .....	2
Initial Employment Opportunities for Beginning Teachers .....	2
Practice-Based Problems of Beginning Teachers .....	2
Retention of Beginning Teachers .....	2
Structuring the Research Topic .....	3
Re-examining Concepts of Teacher Professional Knowledge .....	3
Re-examining the Relationship between Experience and Expertise .....	4
Re-examining the Lived Experiences of Beginning Teachers .....	4
Changing Perceptions of the Experiences of Beginning Teachers .....	5

Beginning Teachers in Changing Work Contexts .....	6
Changing Work Contexts in Australia .....	6
Changing Work Contexts in the U.S. ....	7
Beginning Teachers in New South Wales, Australia.....	9
Implications of Workforce Trends for Beginning Teachers .....	10
Employment Context and Prior Research .....	11
–Reality Shock” and the Contemporary Australian Employment Context.....	11
Teacher Development: The Contemporary Australian Employment Context..	12
The Scope of the Topic .....	13
Conceptual Framework.....	14
Research Approach .....	15
Research Design .....	15
Data Gathering and Data Analysis Methods .....	16
Research Questions.....	17
Research Question 1 .....	17
Research Question 2 .....	17
Research Question 3 .....	18
The Limitations of the Research.....	19
Participant Selection .....	19
Data Collection .....	20
Cohort Comparability .....	20

Generalisation of Findings .....	21
Significance of the Study .....	21
Significance for Educational Research .....	21
Significance for Educational Practice .....	24
Significance for Educational Policy .....	25
Structure of the Thesis .....	26
Summary of Chapter 1 .....	27
Chapter 2   Literature Review .....	29
Introduction.....	29
Background and Context.....	29
Preliminary Investigation into the Field .....	30
Emerging Themes .....	31
Thematic Links to the Research Project .....	36
Situating Research into Beginning Teaching: Career Cycles and Career Stages .....	36
Career Stages, Experience and Developing Competency .....	39
Research Questions and Related Literature .....	43
Research Question 1 .....	43
Research Question 2 .....	46
Research Question 3 .....	47
Summary of Chapter 2 .....	61

Chapter 3 Methodology .....	62
Introduction.....	62
Research Approach.....	62
Qualitative Research: The Role of the Researcher .....	63
Researcher Identity .....	63
Research Design .....	66
A Descriptive Study.....	66
Data Gathering Methods: Case Study.....	68
Data Gathering Methods: Survey-Questionnaire.....	69
Ethics .....	70
Case Study .....	70
Survey–Questionnaire.....	71
Sample: Case Study Participants and Survey Respondents.....	72
Sample: Case Study Participants .....	72
Sample: Survey-Questionnaire Respondents .....	76
Project Timetable.....	81
Concurrent Processes of Data Collection and Organisation.....	82
Data Gathering Process: Case Study .....	84
Participant Narrative as Primary Data Source .....	84
Semi-structured Interview as Primary Data Collection Method.....	84
The Sequence of Case Study Interviews .....	85

Focus Group Interview .....	86
Individual Interviews: Overview .....	86
Data Gathering Process: Survey-Questionnaire .....	93
The Survey-Questionnaire: Content .....	96
Reliability and Validity.....	97
Data Organisation .....	98
Case Study Data.....	98
Survey Data.....	99
Data Analysis.....	99
Case Study .....	99
Survey–Questionnaire.....	101
Data Reduction.....	105
Integrating Data Analysis .....	107
Summary of Chapter 3 .....	109
Chapter 4 Results: Research Question 1 .....	110
Introduction.....	110
Mixed Mode Methods of Data Collection .....	110
Mixed Mode Methods of Data Analysis .....	112
Organisation of the Chapter.....	113
Research Question 1 .....	115
Changes in Personal Practical Knowledge of Teaching.....	115

Changes in Knowledge of Planning for Teaching.....	116
Survey Data about Planning for Teaching .....	116
Case Study Data about Planning for Teaching .....	118
Changes in Knowledge of Inclusive Practice .....	126
Survey Data about Inclusive Practice .....	126
Case Study Data about Inclusive Practice .....	127
Changes in Knowledge of Teacher–Student Relationships.....	128
Survey Data about Teacher–Student Relationships.....	130
Case Study Data about Teacher–Student Relationships .....	130
Summary of Knowledge Gain in Personal Practical Knowledge.....	137
Changes in Knowledge of the Context of Teaching.....	138
Survey Data about Knowledge of Context .....	139
Case Study Data about Knowledge of Context.....	140
Changes in Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher .....	142
Survey Data about Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher.....	143
Case Study Data about Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher .....	149
Summary of Chapter 4.....	153
Chapter 5   Results: Research Question 2 .....	154
Introduction.....	154
Personal Attributes and Professional Circumstances .....	155
Measuring Personal and Professional Differences .....	155

Testing for Statistically Significant Differences .....	156
Engaging in the Practice of Teaching .....	156
Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Planning for Teaching	156
Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Difficulties in Planning .....	157
Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Inclusive Practice .....	159
Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Teacher–Student Relationships.....	160
Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Difficulties with Students .....	161
Summary: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Personal and Professional Factors.....	162
Participation in Professional Socialisation .....	167
Opportunity for Participation in School-wide Groups.....	167
Opportunity for Individual Participation in School-wide Activities.....	169
Opportunity for Professional Support by Mentors.....	170
Difficulties in Accessing Support .....	172
Professional Development Activities.....	173
Negotiating Professional Identity .....	176
Career Direction.....	180
Summary of Survey Data.....	180
Case Study Data: Factors Affecting the Experience of Beginning Teachers .....	181



Engagement in the Practice of Teaching .....	183
Planning for Teaching.....	183
Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations .....	183
Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations .....	187
Professional Socialisation.....	190
Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations .....	190
Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations .....	192
Negotiation of Professional Identity.....	195
Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations .....	195
Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations .....	195
Summary of Chapter 5.....	196
Chapter 6   Results: Research Question 3 .....	197
Introduction.....	197
Methods of Knowledge Development.....	199
Case Study Participants' Methods of Improving Teaching Practice .....	199
Interactivity and Interdependence of Professional Activities.....	208
Relationship 1: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Professional Socialisation .....	208
Case Study Data.....	208
Survey Data.....	212

Relationship 2: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Negotiating Professional Identity .....	217
Negotiating Professional Identity: Case Study Data.....	221
Negotiating Professional Identity: Survey Data .....	225
Relationship 3: Participating in Professional Socialisation and Negotiating Professional Identity .....	227
Summary of Chapter 6.....	228
Chapter 7 Discussion: Findings, Implications and Recommendations.....	230
Introduction.....	230
Presentation of Overall Findings .....	230
(i) Findings Related to the Context of Beginning Teaching.....	231
Expanding the Concept of the Context of Teaching.....	232
Levels of Cohesion in Employment Contexts .....	234
(ii) Findings Related to the Knowledge Base of Teaching .....	237
The Knowledge Base of Teaching in the Literature .....	237
Beginning Teachers' Knowledge Base of Teaching.....	238
(iii) Findings Related to Experience and Expertise.....	247
Beginning Teachers' Development and the Role of Context .....	248
Stages of Beginning Teacher Development.....	249
Phases of Experience and Stages of Development .....	253
Phase 1: The Novice Stage: Learning in Isolation.....	255

Phase 2: Moving from Novice to Advanced Beginner: Learning from the Context.....	257
Phase 3: Approaching Competence: Consolidating Teacher Knowledge .....	259
(iv) Findings Related to Research Question 1.....	262
Changes in Personal Practical Knowledge of Teaching .....	265
Changes in Knowledge of the Context of Teaching .....	269
Changes in Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher.....	269
(v) Findings Related to Research Question 2 .....	270
(vi) Findings Related to Research Question 3.....	272
Implications of the Findings .....	279
Implications of Findings for Educational Research.....	279
Implications of Findings for Educational Policy .....	284
Implications of Findings for Educational Practice.....	287
Significance of the Findings .....	289
Significance of the Findings for Educational Research.....	289
Significance of the Findings for Educational Policy .....	291
Significance of the Findings for Educational Practice.....	292
Summary of Chapter 7.....	293
References .....	295
Appendices .....	312
Appendix A Application to Approach Teacher Education Students .....	313

Appendix A1	Letter of Application to University .....	314
Appendix A2	Presentation to Final Year Teacher Education Students .....	316
Appendix B	Information Sheet and Statement of Informed Consent.....	321
Appendix B1	Focus Group Interview Participants .....	322
Appendix B2	Individual Interview Participants .....	328
Appendix C	Interview Schedules .....	334
Appendix C1	Schedule for Focus Group Interview.....	335
Appendix C2	Schedule for Individual Interviews .....	337
Appendix D	Case Study Participants' Concept Maps and PMI Charts .....	341
	Concept Maps and PMI Charts as Data Collection Instruments .....	342
	Concept Maps .....	342
	Plus-Minus-Interesting Charts (PMI) .....	343
	Initial Concept Maps.....	344
	Initial Concept Map: Alison.....	345
	Initial Concept Map: Bianca .....	346
	Initial Concept Map: Cate .....	347
	Initial Concept Map: Dianne.....	348
	Initial Concept Map: Evan .....	349
	Initial Concept Map: Fiona .....	350
	Initial Concept Map: Graham .....	351
	Second Concept Maps .....	352

Second Concept Map: Alison .....	353
Second Concept Map: Bianca .....	354
Second Concept Map: Cate.....	355
Second Concept Map: Dianne .....	356
Second Concept Map: Evan.....	357
Second Concept Map: Fiona.....	358
Second Concept Map: Graham .....	359
Phase 2 Concept Map .....	360
Phase 2 Concept Map: Helen.....	361
Third Concept Maps .....	362
Third Concept Map: Alison .....	363
Third Concept Map: Bianca.....	364
Third Concept Map: Cate.....	365
Third Concept Map: Evan.....	366
Third Concept Map: Fiona.....	367
Third Concept Map: Graham .....	368
Plus-Minus Interesting Charts (PMI) .....	369
PMI Chart: Alison.....	370
PMI Chart: Bianca .....	371
PMI Chart: Cate .....	372
PMI Chart: Evan .....	373

PMI Chart: Fiona .....	374
PMI Chart: Graham.....	375
Appendix E Transcript of Individual Interview .....	376
Appendix F List of Project Nodes .....	395
Appendix G Sample of Coded Text.....	404
Appendix H Communication with System Leaders.....	413
Appendix H1 Letter to District Superintendents and District Office Staff.....	414
Appendix H2 Initial Letter to Principals.....	417
Appendix H3 Follow-up Letter to Principals.....	420
Appendix H4 Letter Accompanying Survey.....	422
Appendix I Survey-questionnaire.....	427

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	New Appointments in NSW Public Schools: 2002 and 2003 .....	10
Table 3.1	Personal Attributes and Professional Circumstances .....	72
Table 3.2	Personal Attributes of Case Study Participants.....	73
Table 3.3	Pre-service and Teaching Experience of Case Study Participants .....	75
Table 3.4	Number of Respondent Schools with Primary Students in NSW .....	77
Table 3.5	Distribution of NSW Schools with Identified Beginning Teachers .....	78
Table 3.6	Number of Beginning Teachers who Responded to the Survey .....	78
Table 3.7	Personal Attributes of Survey Respondents (N=241) .....	79
Table 3.8	Professional Circumstances of Survey Respondents (N=241).....	80
Table 3.9	Chronological Process of Research Activities .....	82
Table 3.10	Sequence of Interviews .....	87
Table 3.11	Researcher and Participant Activity during Individual Interviews .....	90
Table 3.12	Description of Survey Items Using Likert Scales .....	104
Table 3.13	Internal Consistency of Questionnaire Items .....	105
Table 3.14	New Variables from Factor Analysis, Recoding and Rescaling .....	107
Table 3.15	New Variables from Factor Analysis, Recoding and Rescaling .....	108
Table 4.1	Increase in Knowledge of Planning for Teaching.....	117
Table 4.2	Summary of Information about Planning Taken from Concept Maps..	125
Table 4.3	Increase in Knowledge of Inclusive Practice .....	126
Table 4.4	Summary of Case Study Data about Inclusive Practice .....	129

Table 4.5	Gain in Knowledge of Teacher–Student Relationships .....	130
Table 4.6	Concept Maps: Concepts about Teacher–Student Relationships .....	134
Table 4.7	Survey Respondents: Reasons for Choosing Teaching as a Career .....	143
Table 4.8	Difficulties Reported in the First Year of Teaching .....	146
Table 4.9	Self-identified Areas for Future Professional Development .....	147
Table 4.10	Comparing Reported Difficulties and Development Plans .....	148
Table 4.11	Survey Respondents’ Career Preferences (Multiple Responses) .....	149
Table 4.12	Case Study Participants: Choosing Teaching as a Career .....	149
Table 4.13	Career Situations in Second Year of Teaching .....	152
Table 5.1	Significant Differences: Knowledge of Planning for Teaching .....	158
Table 5.2	Significant Differences: Reported Difficulties in Planning .....	159
Table 5.3	Significant Differences: Knowledge of Inclusive Practice .....	160
Table 5.4	Significant Differences: Teacher–Student Relationships .....	161
Table 5.5	Significant Differences: Reported Difficulties with Students .....	162
Table 5.6	Personal and Professional Factors and Teaching Practice .....	163
Table 5.7	Reported Difficulties in Teaching Practice .....	165
Table 5.8	Significant Differences: Opportunity for School Group Participation..	168
Table 5.9	Significant Differences: Opportunity for Individual Participation .....	170
Table 5.10	Significant Differences: Access to Mentors .....	172
Table 5.11	Significant Differences: Perceived Difficulties in Gaining Support....	173
Table 5.12	Significant Differences: Professional Development .....	175



Table 5.13	Significant Differences: Improving Teaching (PD) .....	176
Table 5.14	Personal and Professional Factors and Professional Socialisation.....	177
Table 5.15	Significant Differences: Improving Teaching by Staff Discussion .....	179
Table 5.16	Significant Differences: Private Means of Improving Teaching .....	180
Table 5.17	Professional Circumstances of Case Study Participants .....	182
Table 6.1	Activities Used to Improve Teaching Practice.....	206
Table 6.2	Contribution by Mentors to Development of Practical Knowledge.....	213
Table 6.3	Extent of Participation in School-wide Group Activities.....	214
Table 6.4	Practical Knowledge and Participation in School-wide Groups .....	214
Table 6.5	Extent of Participation in Individual Teacher Activities.....	215
Table 6.6	Practical Knowledge and Participation outside the Classroom.....	216
Table 6.7	Practical Knowledge and Professional Development .....	217
Table 6.8	Reasons for Becoming a Primary Teacher: Open Response Item .....	226
Table 7.1	Comparison between Two Conceptions of Career Entry Phases .....	248
Table 7.2	Developing Teacher Knowledge during Phases of Teaching .....	259

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Timetable of Research Activity.....	83
Figure 2.	Accessing survey respondents through system leadership levels .....	95
Figure 3.	Conceptualisation of domains and aspects of teacher knowledge .....	114
Figure 4.	Construct of the domain of personal practical knowledge of teaching	116
Figure 5.	Construct of knowledge of the context of teaching.....	139
Figure 6	Domains of knowledge and processes of knowledge acquisition .....	198
Figure 7	Cohesion in work experience .....	234
Figure 8	The development of the knowledge base of teaching .....	239
Figure 9	Model of personal practical knowledge .....	242
Figure 10	Model of knowledge of context of teaching.....	244
Figure 11	Model of knowledge of self-as-teacher .....	246
Figure 12	Phases of experience and stages of development: A process model ....	254
Figure 13	Differentiated experience: Effects on teachers and systems .....	276

## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the knowledge growth of beginning primary teachers in different employment contexts in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. It examines the difference in competency in the first two years of teaching attained by those who commenced teaching in stable, cohesive circumstances with secure, continuing employment and that of their colleagues, a majority of beginning teachers, who worked in uncertain and fragmented teaching situations as casual, relief or substitute teachers.

This study also proposes an extension of current models of the knowledge base of teaching and the formulation of a more complex view of the knowledge base comprising three domains, knowledge of the practice of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching, and knowledge of self-as-teacher.

This thesis proposes a redefinition of the current concept of “context” beyond the school in which a teacher is employed to the broader concept of the employment context itself and examines the contextual factors impacting on teacher development. It enhances extant models of teacher development that describe teacher competencies at time-bound stages of a teacher’s career and proposes that beginning teachers’ movement from one stage of development to the next requires experience-in-context.

A literature review provided insights into the way in which researchers such as Bullough (see, for example, Bullough, 1989, 1997; Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1992) and Berliner (1995, 1998, 2001) represented the experiences of beginning teachers and their development. The data revealed some consonance in the experience of beginning teaching between contemporary Australian teachers and teachers represented in the literature. There were also significant differences, resulting from the effect of differences in initial employment experience that remained hitherto unexamined by other authors.

This research study utilised an exploratory mixed methods design. Data were gathered primarily through semi-structured interviews in a collective case study of eight participants. The question-response format was complemented by classroom observation, stimulated recall, document and artefact analysis and participant completion of a series of concept maps. In addition, a postal survey-questionnaire

provided quantitative data from 241 beginning teachers located across NSW, Australia.

The data indicated that the employment context significantly affected teacher development. Teachers in cohesive situations experienced development in all three domains of the knowledge base and were able to progress beyond the “novice” stage within two years. Those who spent two years in uncertain and fragmented employment contexts frequently regressed.

This study will be of interest to educational researchers as it proposes some redefinitions of accepted constructs commonly applied to beginning teachers’ development. It will be of interest also to educational policy makers in clarifying the effect on future teacher competency of learning to teach in uncertain contexts, and to educational practitioners who are responsible for the induction and mentoring of teachers whose early experience may have been less than professionally satisfying.

## Chapter 1 Introduction

### *Context and Background*

The education of primary students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century depends on the provision of teachers who are able to facilitate the development of increasingly complex arrays of knowledge, skills and understandings. This capacity is one developed jointly by teacher education institutions and schools. Initial experience in practicum work in schools during pre-service teacher education must be complemented by appropriate support as teachers enter the profession, so that the transition to full professional membership is based on ongoing development of teachers' knowledge of teaching. This thesis explores the effect on teacher development of the employment context in which teachers commence teaching. It examines the process of professional learning engaged in during the first two years of teaching by those who commence teaching in stable, secure and continuing school-based employment and that of their colleagues who work in more fragmented teaching situations as non-permanent teachers, employed as relief or substitute teachers to replace colleagues temporarily absent from their classrooms.

The study explores the experiences of a group of beginning teachers who commenced their teaching careers in 2003 in New South Wales, Australia. It examines the changing nature of the employment context for beginning teachers in the light of a research literature largely based in European and North American traditions. This study considers twentieth century models of understanding of the experience of learning to teach and critiques their relevance to the contemporary situation in Australia in terms of the knowledge and skills required by contemporary beginning teachers in order, firstly, to succeed as teachers; secondly, to see themselves as teachers; thirdly, to be seen by others in the profession and outside it as teachers; and fourthly, to remain as teachers in a system which is now becoming aware of the need not only to recruit but also to retain new teachers.

*Research Aim and Impetus for Research*

The overall aim of this research was to examine the effect of differentiated employment context on the development of beginning teachers' knowledge of teaching. Research was prompted by three concerns arising from the researcher's own experience as a primary school principal and from professional work over many years inducting, mentoring and developing beginning teachers.

*Initial Employment Opportunities for Beginning Teachers*

The first concern was the realisation that many of those who had worked as internship students (that is, pre-service teachers in their last year of teacher education working in schools for an extended period of time) within the researcher's own school would graduate and begin teaching without security of tenure or the opportunity to take what they had demonstrated during their internship and build on it in teaching a class of their own.

*Practice-Based Problems of Beginning Teachers*

The second issue was a growing realisation from personal professional experience that for many beginning teachers, like those of previous generations, beginning teaching is still very difficult. It appears that teachers in schools and teacher educators still know too little about how to implement what is known in order to make the initial process of learning to teach more satisfying and less debilitating in terms of physical and emotional health for new entrants to the profession.

*Retention of Beginning Teachers*

And thirdly, there was a concern for the future of a profession where many are retiring and many of those who are entering are choosing to resign in the first three to five years. The teaching profession in NSW is therefore likely to be grounded in the future on teachers, many of whom have experienced a fragmented and often frustrating beginning to their careers, and have remained teachers in spite of the difficulties, as well as (rather than because of) the more limited satisfactions. Whether these teachers who enter the profession as casual teachers will survive their

initial years of teaching, and in doing so be able to sustain the profession or will instead flee from it, is problematic for the future of NSW schools and students.

### *Structuring the Research Topic*

This thesis explores the changes that occur in teacher knowledge over the first two years of teaching and the influence of contextual factors on the construction of an expanded knowledge base. It draws on the literature related to beginning teaching and teacher knowledge and, in doing so, focuses on three aspects of the knowledge base of teaching—knowledge of the practice of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher. The study explores the related constructs which permeate the literature: the process of engagement in the practice of teaching through accepting responsibility for the learning of a class of students; the process of professional socialisation through participating in the life and work of a school community; and the process of negotiation of professional identity through strengthening recognition of self-as-teacher.

The present study examines also the literature concerned with the development of teacher competency in which phases of experience, represented by time in teaching, are connected to stages of development of teaching expertise. Empirical research is directed towards developing a more nuanced understanding of these models of teacher development which takes into account the contemporary employment context. In doing so, this study moves beyond many present and previous conceptions of the process of learning to teach and of the concepts of experience and expertise and explores the extent to which the nexus between experience and expertise can be disrupted by appropriate or inappropriate initial employment experience.

### *Re-examining Concepts of Teacher Professional Knowledge*

Firstly, this study moves beyond the concept of teacher knowledge as propositional knowledge acquired in initial teacher education and enacted in classroom teaching, to an understanding of knowledge as constructed through the interrelated professional activities of engagement in the practice of teaching, professional socialisation and

professional identity negotiation. In sum, this study takes the position that teacher knowledge comprises three components—personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching, and knowledge of self-as-teacher. This composite knowledge is drawn from all three professional activities and each activity and its knowledge product is dependent on and contributes to the development of each of the other components. The process of knowledge growth is iterative and interactive, and the nature of the context in which newly qualified teachers begin to teach is fundamental to progressing or hindering this process of iterative development.

### *Re-examining the Relationship between Experience and Expertise*

Secondly, it addresses the erstwhile perceived nexus between experience and expertise. The study demonstrates that such a nexus now relates competency to experience-within-context, rather than more simply to time since graduation, despite the fact that the latter perception lingers on in the employment and induction processes of contemporary schools as the assumed primary determinant of teacher competency. The development of teaching expertise is considered as a non-linear process mediated by the employment context and the extent to which it promotes practical knowledge acquisition, socialisation and identity construction. This study extends the construct of context and its influence on teacher development from that of the school (2001, p. 55) to that of the wider employment situation within which teachers are placed, in acknowledgement of the fact that beginning teachers in NSW face within that context hurdles which for some are insuperable: that of finding ongoing, stable and secure employment in a specific school as a class-based teacher.

### *Re-examining the Lived Experiences of Beginning Teachers*

Thirdly, it privileges the voices of contemporary beginning teachers themselves through a range of methodological tasks which allow them to explore their own paths to competency and the effects of their differing journeys on their perceptions of themselves as teachers, their perceived place in the profession and their commitment to it. In doing so, the study raises questions in relation to the changing nature of teachers' career paths as they have evolved over the past two decades.



*Changing Perceptions of the Experiences of Beginning Teachers*

The place of beginning teachers in the literature of educational research has changed somewhat over the past two decades. Initially, the experiences of beginning teachers were examined for their intrinsic interest (Bullough, 1989; Bullough et al., 1992) and this research often comprised descriptive accounts of the journey undertaken by beginning teachers in their early years of teaching. These accounts foregrounded the views and observations of particular teachers themselves and provided often poignant accounts of the way in which early career teachers navigated the somewhat rocky waters and dangerous shoals of their first school, classroom and students (Veenman, 1984).

Late twentieth century literature about beginning teachers sought also to describe teachers' experience in terms of career phases, that is, periods of time which comprised phases in the career trajectory and which aligned with the demonstration of specific knowledge and skills (Huberman, 1989; Huberman, Gronauer, & Marti, 1993). The "career entry" phase of beginning teachers was thus characterised by concurrent themes of "survival" and "discovery" during which "survival" was often a time of self-doubt and "reality shock" (Huberman et al., 1993, p. 36). In this model of the teaching career the initial, novice, or beginning phase was considered to last from 3-5 years and represented a period of time when teachers moved from the reality shock of the early career to a period of stabilisation in which both confidence and competence were consolidated (Huberman, 1989). The current experience of reality shock is compounded by the lack of a stable, secure and single class-based experience of teaching for many contemporary beginning teachers.

Researchers such as Huberman provided insight into the experiences of beginning teachers largely through contrasting them with those of more experienced and more expert colleagues (Goodson, 1997). In doing so, they were amongst the first to acknowledge that the issues which faced beginning teachers were inherent in the professional experience of all beginners, were not necessarily related to deficits in training or capability of teachers themselves, and could be ameliorated by reviewing the conditions under which most beginning teachers began teaching (Bullough, 1989; Featherstone, 1993). The purpose of these writings was to examine ways to improve

the capacity of beginners to teach effectively in the interests of greater professional satisfaction for teachers themselves at the beginning of what was generally assumed to be life-long careers (Huberman, 1989). However, this focus has undergone considerable change in both Australia and overseas.

### *Beginning Teachers in Changing Work Contexts*

The focus of concern for early career teachers since the turn of the new century has changed as workforce requirements engendered greater interest in the experiences of new entrants to the teaching profession in response to the growing awareness of unprecedented attrition rates amongst new teachers, both in Australia and overseas. This study examines one of the hitherto little acknowledged causes of early attrition, that is, the difficulty of obtaining satisfying continuing work as a teacher in a cohesive single school context.

### *Changing Work Contexts in Australia*

A renewed interest in the study of early career teachers' experiences in recent years has been prompted to some extent by the exigencies of the demographic changes besetting Australian and overseas educational systems (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003, p. 37). This has led to concerns about replacing the generation of teachers due to retire by 2012, the difficulties of balancing supply and demand of qualified teachers and an emerging concern with the level of attrition of new teachers (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Preston, 2000). In Australia, 25–40 per cent of all newly-recruited teachers burn out or resign in their first three to five years of teaching (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Ewing & Smith, 2003): that is, just on the cusp of what many would regard as the beginnings of competent and autonomous success as teachers (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Huberman, 1989), a situation that suggests a significant level of resource wastage at personal, professional and societal levels.

As a result of these workforce trends, there has arisen a change of emphasis in discussion about the experiences of beginning teachers (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Ewing & Smith, 2003; Manuel, 2003; Skilbeck & Connell, 2003). As Australian workforce planners became concerned about the anticipated teacher shortages in

terms of both numbers and teacher experience (equated with teacher expertise) caused by accelerating levels of retirement of long-serving staff, the attrition of beginning teachers reached the political and educational agenda. The result of this was a reawakening of concern in policy, practice and research with the difficulties experienced by beginning teachers and an emerging awareness of the need to provide more effective support to them in order to retain them in school systems (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2004; Skilbeck & Connell, 2004; Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis, & Parker, 2000).

Teacher shortages in Australia traditionally have been addressed by recruitment drives within or between states or even overseas. What characterises the current concern about the predicted teacher shortages of the next decade is the increasing acknowledgement by governments and researchers alike that shortages will no longer be addressed by recruitment alone and that the issue of retention is a more urgent one. Manuel expressed the views of many that support provided to beginning teachers required improvement:

Our efforts to enhance the substance and provision of pre-service and induction programmes are futile unless we can ensure that the cultural, intellectual, creative, and educational capital brought to the profession by beginning teachers is not dissipated or lost because of this early career attrition (Manuel, 2003, p. 142).

In addition, the increasing focus on teacher and school accountability measured by student achievement in state-based, national and even international testing regimes suggests that retention of effective teachers is vital. In the current climate, as experienced teachers leave systems for retirement or other employment, the numbers are diminishing of those who can provide the support to beginning teachers that research now suggests is integral to their survival and necessary for their development.

### *Changing Work Contexts in the U.S.*

These difficulties of teacher attrition, and a concomitant change in research and policy focus, are evident not only in Australia but also in the U.S. (Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007).

In 2003, the United States Department of Education estimated that approximately 2.2 million new teachers would be needed over the next decade, an annual average of more than 200 000 new teachers. Statistics from the United States suggested that retention, as much as recruitment, will need to become an increasing focus of workforce planners as they cope with the increasing rate of retirements and resignations. In 2004, the attrition rate of beginning teachers was estimated to stand at ten percent expected to leave in their first year, 29 per cent in their third year, and 39 per cent within five years (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Inman & Marlow, 2004). In the U.S., as in Australia, the prevalence of high attrition rates has prompted renewed interest in the development of beginning teachers and in the need to arrest attrition through the provision of improved in-school support (Cockburn, 2000).

However, for primary teachers in Australia, the proposed shortages have not resulted in greater opportunity for permanent employment, as new staffing practices and reduced student numbers have resulted in fewer vacancies for newly graduated teachers. Although the concern about attrition of those who have been employed has resulted in greater focus on induction and mentoring of newly employed teachers, the employment of beginning primary teachers in secure and stable positions remains problematic with too few of the 7000 primary teachers who graduate each year gaining permanent employment in their first year of teaching (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 87; Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs, 2003, p. 21).

Table 1.1 shows that the employment of beginning teachers (graduate recruits) in NSW constituted a diminishing number of teacher appointments between 2002 and 2003 and the trend has continued. In 2008-9, a year when 8000 teachers graduated in primary education across Australia, 114 primary school graduates were appointed to schools in New South Wales (NSW), Australia's most populous state (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009, p. 3). Similar trends have been reported in other states (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 89).

*Beginning Teachers in New South Wales, Australia*

New South Wales is Australia's largest employer of teachers and in 2003-4 (the years in which data were gathered for this study) its primary schools employed a total of just over 36 000 teachers, of whom 71 per cent were employed in government schools. In Australia, school education is the constitutional responsibility of state governments and NSW teachers comprise almost a third of the national teaching force. In New South Wales, the context for employment of beginning teachers has changed markedly over the past twenty years and the first problem confronting beginning primary teachers, in NSW as in other states of Australia, is that of gaining employment in a situation of apparent over-supply (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2004).

Whereas teacher education students were once guaranteed a position within the NSW Department of Education and Training (the state's public education system and largest employer of newly graduated teachers), a majority of graduating students now make the transition from university student to practising teacher in an uncertain employment context, without initial permanent employment in a single school, and without the opportunity to develop an understanding of the profession, of themselves as teachers, and of the means to professional competency in the context of their own class.

Table 1.1 (compiled from information in the NSW Department of Education and Training's Annual Reports of 2002 and 2003) shows the number of graduate (beginning) teachers who were able to take up vacancies in the NSW government system in 2002 and 2003. More than 4000 graduates in both 2002 and 2003 applied to be part of the Graduate Recruitment Program. Each year, 1000 teachers were ~~targeted~~ for fast tracking to permanent appointment under this program, but not all were placed in teaching positions as Table 1.1 shows (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2002b, pp. 77-81; 2003, p. 68 & p. 210).

Table 1.1 suggests that for graduates seeking permanent work in 2003, the only avenue available was through the Graduate Recruitment (~~targeted~~ graduate) program. The policy of appointing teachers to permanent positions from the list of

available non-permanent (casual) teachers according to priority determined by length of continuous service as a casual teacher and service in isolated areas suggests that new graduates would have little opportunity to compete with more experienced casual teachers for a reduced number of total available positions (from 2479 in 2002 to 1398 in 2003). New graduates seeking employment in the NSW Department of Education and Training in 2003 were therefore more likely to be found in the ranks of casual and temporary teachers than in those of permanent employees.

Table 1.1 *New Appointments in NSW Public Schools: 2002 and 2003*

Method of filling vacancies	Number 2001-2	% of total	Number 2002-3	% of total
Scholarship holders (secondary)	28	1	35	2
Graduate recruits (primary and secondary) <sup>a</sup>	623	19	465	24
ATSI employment	33	1	22	1
Targeted casuals (PEP <sup>b</sup> )	62	2	0	0
Employment (TEPS <sup>c</sup> )	1646	51	758	39
Employment (non-TEPS)	833	26	640	33
Total	3225	100	1920	99

<sup>a</sup> Separate statistics for primary and secondary graduate recruit appointments were not made available by the NSW Department of Education and Training.

<sup>b</sup> PEP: Priority Employment Program: casual teachers were permitted to apply for classroom teacher positions through merit selection, rather than await appointment by the central staffing directorate.

<sup>c</sup> TEPS: Casual teachers were appointed to permanent positions based on priority provided by the number of transfer points accrued as a result of working in continuous casual positions over prolonged periods of time and in isolated areas. Separate TEPS/non-TEPS figures were not provided in 2003.

### *Implications of Workforce Trends for Beginning Teachers*

In much of the literature which dealt with the orientation and induction of beginning teachers to the profession from the late 1980s to the present, there was an assumption that beginning teachers were those who worked in their own classrooms in schools

where they had security of tenure, and who thereby had an accepted position as a member of both the staff of the school and of the profession itself (Bullough, 1997). Novice teachers were therefore those whose trials and tribulations in learning to teach were resolved (or not) in the context of this class and this school through personal reflection on the confluence of knowledge gained in teacher education courses and the reality of day-to-day classroom experience (Bullough, 1989). For most beginning teachers in NSW, and particularly for those who have chosen to work in primary schools, this is now unlikely to be their early career experience. The fragmented initial employment context experienced by most beginning teachers in NSW represents a significant change in teacher career planning. While most beginning teachers experience the reality of fragmentation, the rhetoric of teacher education and teacher recruitment programs and policies promises and prepares for an entirely different reality of permanence, security and satisfaction. For many, their initial response to the profession is one of disappointment and disillusionment as they struggle to manage in short-term teaching situations where much of what they have learned cannot be practised or developed and some is simply lost (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007, p. 87).

### *Employment Context and Prior Research*

#### *“Reality Shock” and the Contemporary Australian Employment Context*

Research into the lives of beginning teachers now focuses on their perceptions of teaching as a career and the potential of teacher education institutions, schools and systems to retain the teachers who will be needed to replace those leaving through retirement or resignation (Manuel, 2003). The earlier concern with recounting the experiences *per se* of beginning teachers, for the purpose of coming to an understanding of the generalities that beset them has been subsumed now into considerations of ways to address and alleviate the acknowledged stress of the first year as a means to retention of early career teachers in the profession (Cockburn, 2000; Olebe, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Weiss, 1999).

The impetus for the current study came partly from a desire to explore the 20<sup>th</sup> century concept of “reality shock” (Huberman, 1995, p. 196) in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher development. However, the contextual change brought about by the shift in demand for primary teachers has meant that reality shock is qualitatively different for those now beginning to teach. Current researchers identify many of the same issues as their contemporaries of twenty years ago (Boreham, Gray, & Blake, 2006), but the fragmented context in which most Australian beginning teachers now begin their work has exacerbated the problem of moving from recognition and acknowledgement of problems to resolution. Added to the reality shock of the first classroom, for most beginning primary teachers, is the fact that there is little in this first classroom from which they can expect to derive ongoing professional satisfaction (McCormack & Thomas, 2003). With the widespread experience of fragmented employment in the first few years of teaching, the shock of beginning to teach remains severe: it is, however, compounded by the contextual uncertainty experienced by the majority of Australian beginning teachers and their inability to access the supports which are required to ameliorate the effects of reality shock.

*Teacher Development: The Contemporary Australian Employment Context*

Huberman et al., (1993) in an extensive study of Swiss secondary teachers portrayed the career of a teacher as a series of developmental phases. The first year was recognised by Huberman and others as a time when the culture of the employment context had a significant bearing on the development of professional identity, of “self-as-teacher” (Nias, 1986) and on the acquisition of practical pedagogical knowledge (Clandinin, 1986; Elbaz, 1983). However, in this research there was an assumed school-based culture within which teachers worked and which provided the context in which continuing teaching led, for the vast majority, into the second and subsequent career phases, associated with a linear process of increasing expertise.

Other researchers, notably Berliner, contributed models and theories which suggested conditions under which progression in expertise occurred differently in the course of a teacher’s career (Berliner, 1986, 1995, 2001; Desforges, 1995; Livingston & Borko, 1989). Berliner described this progression as a series of stages of expertise where expertise was acquired through deliberate practice within a supportive context



(Berliner, 2001). Unlike the earlier “life cycle” research which tended to assume increasing competency with increasing experience, Berliner proposed that the nexus between experience and expertise be broken and that “stages” of competency be seen to be not necessarily synchronous with phases of career experience, once teachers moved beyond the very initial stages of teaching. It remained to Berliner to suggest that, apart from the initial novice stage of teaching, experience in terms of a given number of years was a necessary, but not in itself sufficient, determinant of the development of teacher expertise.

These discussions were predicated on an understanding of “context” as comprising the school-based environment in which teachers worked (Angelle, 2006; Berliner, 2001; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Weiss, 1999). However, “context” remained a synonym for “school”; there was as yet no recognition of the qualitatively different situation faced by Australian beginners: that of developing as teachers outside a specific school context, within a more broadly defined context, and through engagement in multiple classrooms in multiple schools.

### *The Scope of the Topic*

In its exploration of the effect of differentiated employment context on beginning teachers’ knowledge, this study examined the ways in which beginning teachers learned to teach in initial teaching contexts which, for a majority of teachers, were markedly different from those in which their more experienced colleagues began their teaching careers. Research was directed to identifying, describing and analysing the processes by which teachers reconstructed their professional knowledge base (Grossman, 1990, 1995) during the initial two years of their teaching career. In addition the study explored the differences in such knowledge development afforded by beginning to teach, either in stable and secure school-based and continuing class-based circumstances or in the fragmented and uncertain circumstances of casual teaching in many schools and many classrooms.

The study examined changes which occurred in teacher knowledge, expressed through the accounts of beginning teachers of their own experiences, as they learned to teach in a variety of teaching contexts. These experiences were considered through

three lenses which focused on teachers' experiences of three professional activities--engaging in the practice of teaching, participation in professional socialisation, and negotiation of professional identity. These activities comprised both the context in which the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers was developed and the source of its content: personal practical knowledge of teaching; knowledge of the context of teaching, and knowledge of self-as-teacher.

### *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework for this study is based on the inter-connectedness of constructs which contribute to an understanding of the content of the professional knowledge base of teachers, the process by which it is developed and the context in which the development of professional knowledge occurs. The framework reflects the complexity and fluidity of teaching practice and of the task of learning to teach as it is perceived by neophytes to the profession, and the study represents that complexity by both analysing the separate components of the knowledge base and by synthesizing them into a whole represented by the concept of the professional knowledge base.

The constructs related to components of the professional knowledge base of teachers and which are used in framing this discussion include personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher. The study discusses and further explores the process whereby these three components of the knowledge base are re-constructed through formal and informal learning. This learning may be undertaken individually and socially, as a teacher engages in three professional activities, namely, engagement in the practice of teaching; participation in professional socialisation; and negotiation of professional identity. These activities and their resultant knowledge outcomes represent developmental processes experienced simultaneously and iteratively, where each process is simultaneously in continuous iteration and continuous interaction with each of the others.

*Research Approach*

This study used a qualitative research approach. The phenomenon to be studied was found not in objective descriptions of the lives of teachers by others but, rather, in an exploration of teachers' own understandings of the experiences that constituted the professional aspect of their lives and the meanings they drew from the experience of beginning teaching. Data were gathered, analysed and reported in ways that reflected the subjectivities and sensitivities to the phenomenon of beginning teaching of both the researcher and the participants. In selecting this research approach, it was intended that the research be characterised by detailed description and thematic analysis. This in turn meant that the results of the research were intended to produce greater understanding of the phenomenon rather than prediction, explanation or generalisation to a wider population (Creswell, 1998, 2008; Cropley, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

*Research Design*

In its data gathering, data analysis and data reporting processes this study was designed initially as a descriptive study which employed a longitudinal collective case study design (Stake, 1995, 2000). The experiences of a group of eight newly graduated teachers were recorded using an integrative multi-method, multi-site and multi-person qualitative research approach intended to provide opportunity for both researcher and participant initiative. Researcher perspective was encapsulated in the framing of semi-structured interviews, both focus group and individual (see Appendix C); in selection of the foci of classroom observation and document analysis; and in the selection of classroom events to be captured in a photographic record of classroom proceedings. In responding to these processes through semi-structured interviews teachers provided a guided recount of experiences. Using a process of stimulated recall based on a photographic record of selected events throughout the teaching day, teachers extended recount into explanation of pedagogical decision-making. Teacher perspective was obtained also through participant construction during successive interviews of unprompted graphic organisers (concept maps and Plus-Minus-Interesting (PMI) charts) (see Appendix D) with associated verbal commentary which privileged teacher voice at key points

in the first two years of classroom practice. A second group of 241 beginning teachers whose experiences were recorded using a cross-sectional attitude survey (Creswell, 2008, p. 389) provided additional data based on their responses to a postal survey-questionnaire (see Appendix I).

### *Data Gathering and Data Analysis Methods*

This study used a mixed-mode, multi-site, multi-person and multi-method means of data collection and data analysis. Data gathering in relation to case study participants was carried out through semi-structured interview, stimulated recall processes, classroom observation and document analysis. In addition, a survey-questionnaire sent to all schools with primary students across NSW at the end of the first year of teaching provided quantitative and qualitative data from 241 teachers to complement the qualitative data obtained in the case study. These data gathering methods were intended to provide complementary sets of data to enable constant comparison of findings arrived at from one method or one cohort with those of other methods and other participants.

Data collection from both the case study and the survey-questionnaire, and iterative data analysis from both sources were interwoven, with analysis informing subsequent collection, analysis and interpretation of data from both sources. Qualitative data from the case study were analysed using N Vivo 1.3 (QSR International, 2000) and categorisation of non-numerical case study data were followed by cross-case and within-case analysis, providing the basis for the emergence of grounded theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The survey-questionnaire provided both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data from forced response items were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures (utilising SPSS Version 14.0 and later Version 16) (SPSS Inc., 2007) appropriate for nonparametric data (Pallant, 2005). A number of univariate and bivariate descriptive statistical tests, and some inferential testing for statistically significant differences between groups were undertaken to ascertain responses to each research question and, more particularly, to Research Question 2. Qualitative data drawn from open-ended items were entered into Excel for collation, categorisation and thematic analysis of data. Constant comparative analysis of

qualitative and quantitative data from both the case study and the survey-questionnaire facilitated continual refinement and triangulation of findings.

### *Research Questions*

This thesis is based on a study conducted in 2003-4 with graduating teachers who commenced work as qualified primary school teachers at the start of 2003 in a range of different employment contexts. The study explored the ways in which a group of beginning primary teachers in NSW, Australia, working in differentiated employment contexts, made changes in their professional knowledge (Grossman, 1990, 1995; Turner-Bisset, 1999) as they engaged in the first two years of teaching and, to this end, three research questions were posed.

#### *Research Question 1*

What changes in teacher knowledge were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching?

This question addressed the nature of the changes which occurred in the knowledge base of teaching and explored changes in three domains of knowledge reported by participants. These changes included changes in personal practical knowledge of teaching (Clandinin, 1986; Elbaz, 1983), including development in the elements of subject matter-content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Reynolds, 1995; Reynolds, 1989; Shulman, 1986, 1987); changes in knowledge of the context of teaching in relation to both schools and the profession (Nias, 1986); and changes in knowledge of self-as-teacher (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

#### *Research Question 2*

What personal and professional factors may have contributed to differences in teachers' experience of beginning teaching?

In addressing this question, the study provided new information about a range of personal and professional factors related to the context of beginning teaching, factors

which contributed singly or together to promote different experiences of career entry (Ball & Goodson, 1985). The study looked specifically at a range of personal attributes—age, gender, qualifications and prior work experience—and a range of professional circumstances—school location, employment status, extent of continuing class-based employment and the number of schools in which teachers were employed—and the effect of each of these on how teachers responded to their entry into the profession. In particular, it examined the effect of “casual” (relief or substitute) status on teachers’ work lives (Galloway & Morrison, 1994; McCormack & Thomas, 2002; Nidds & McGerald, 1994; Quintrell & Maguire, 1998; Williamson, Webb, Cowley, & Churchill, 1995) and compared perceptions of career satisfaction and career development reported by those in secure, stable and cohesive employment with those of colleagues in uncertain and fragmented teaching situations. It sought also to differentiate personal from professional circumstances and to address in particular the professional contextual influences which appeared to have had most effect on the development of teachers’ professional knowledge.

### *Research Question 3*

How did differences in teachers’ experience affect the development of their knowledge base of teaching?

In responding to this research question, the ways in which teachers negotiated the professional activities of engagement in the practice of teaching, participation in professional socialisation and negotiation of professional identity in various contextual circumstances were examined, together with the impact of these activities within differentiated circumstances on teachers’ knowledge development.

The study examined the cognitive processes used by participant beginning teachers to evaluate and reconstruct their existing and developing knowledge about teachers and teaching (Beattie, 2000; Calderhead, 1988; Calderhead & Gates, 1993) and the effect on these of a range of employment experiences. It also explored the concept of professional socialisation as the process through which beginning teachers acquire those aspects of their professional knowledge base that pertain to the school as a social system and a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), located within the wider

context of the local community and the broader educational organization (Kardos, Johnson, Peske, Kauffman, & Liu, 2001). The implications for procedures and policies concerning school-based and system-based induction, mentoring, supervision and professional development of beginning teachers were also considered (Lawn & Grace, 1987; Little, 2002). As well, in the context of addressing this research question, the study examined the beliefs, attitudes, images and metaphors about teaching and teachers held by the participant beginning teachers (Block & Hazelip, 1995; Clandinin, 1986; Provenso, McCloskey, Kottkamp, & Cohn, 1989; Taylor, 1989) and considered the influence of these on the process of personal and professional development and professional identity negotiation (Coldron & Smith, 1999).

In addressing this research question, the study examined the way in which differences in work experience led to differentiated responses to the above professional activities and thus, to differentiated attainment of personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher.

### *The Limitations of the Research*

Data collection for this research study was carried out by means of a longitudinal case study of eight graduating teachers and a survey of all public primary schools in NSW. The process and products of the research were initially limited by some aspects of both methods of data collection.

### *Participant Selection*

The selection of case study participants was limited to an opportunity sample of self-selected pre-service teachers initially located in a university within reasonable geographic proximity (that is, a distance of 165 kilometres) to the researcher's workplace. As pre-service students became teachers in more widely spread geographic locations, the effect of distance was again a limitation in terms of the number of personal contacts that were possible with each case study participant. Limitations of the survey method were evident in the recruitment of respondents.

Ethical considerations placed restrictions on direct contact by questionnaire with teachers in schools and the researcher was reliant upon senior staff at district office and principal level to identify and contact suitable interview respondents. The success or otherwise of this strategy in reaching all potentially available survey participants is difficult to gauge. The resulting sample of teachers resulted from a process over which the researcher had no control but which was not a random sample in the strictest sense (Burns, 2000, pp. 85-88; Creswell, 2008, pp. 152-155; de Vaus, 2002, p. 70). This limited the type of statistical tests that could be used to analyse the survey data to those suitable for non-parametric data.

### *Data Collection*

The issues of cost, distance and time for data collection limited the number of interviews conducted with each participating teacher to three per teacher including two classroom observations. In the course of data collection in the case study, a process of photographic stimulated recall was used to facilitate teacher reflection on classroom events. Some limitations were placed on this process in one school where digital photography of the classroom was not allowed, and verbal descriptions from classroom observation notes made by the researcher were relied upon. As well, the process of data collection through a state-wide survey was possible only by accessing one educational system, that of the public education system in NSW. Although this represented a substantial number of schools (n=1799) it also limited the survey data obtainable from teachers who had commenced work in schools in other systems. Considerations of teacher experience in non-public schools in NSW were therefore limited to case study interviewees who commenced teaching outside the public system.

### *Cohort Comparability*

The process of data gathering in this study utilised mixed methods and data were obtained from two cohorts at different points in time. The second interview of case study participants, held during the second semester of teaching, coincided with the sending out of the survey. However, the survey required respondents to reflect on the first year of teaching at its end and was intended to be a summative evaluation of



teaching experience, while the interview process was intended to be a cumulative record and formative evaluation, extending into the second year of teaching.

### *Generalisation of Findings*

Although some cautious generalisations have been drawn where the data obtained from interviews supported data obtained from the surveys, it has not been the intention of the researcher to obtain findings which could be considered equally applicable to all beginning teachers in all situations. As a descriptive study using mixed methods of data gathering, some findings obtained from each data collection method were comparable, some were contrastive and some were independent.

### *Significance of the Study*

This study is important for the following reasons, related to the place of beginning teachers in research, in educational policy and in current educational practice.

### *Significance for Educational Research*

The study seeks to extend the literature on beginning teachers to provide a more nuanced view of current career entry experience as it is now lived within an employment context that qualitatively differentiates the experience for many teachers from that reported in the literature.

### *Extending understanding of the work lives of beginning teachers*

This study extends understanding of beginning teachers' work lives in several ways. Firstly, it focuses on teachers in one state of Australia and in doing so gives prominence to a group of teachers who have been less widely researched than their British or American counterparts. Secondly, an important focus of this research is on those teachers who commence their careers as non-permanent teachers, working as casual, relief or substitute teachers in many schools and many classrooms in the course of their first years of teaching. This is a group whose issues have been minimally dealt with in the literature. Where once these teachers were a minority, who often accepted such work as a life-style choice, it is now the most common form

of entry into the teaching profession (and not the preferred option for most beginning teachers). Because of this, the literature focusing almost exclusively on beginning teachers located in one school, teaching their own class and with ongoing continuity of experience, no longer fully represents contemporary beginning teachers' experience. Thirdly, the study examines the common perceptions of the issues, concerns and problems of beginning teachers as reported in the literature and relates them to the added problem of the employment context to extend understanding of the personal and professional complexity of entering the contemporary teaching profession.

*Extending the concept of the "context" of teaching*

The literature concerning the experiences of beginning teachers provides considerable insight into the effect on teacher development, teacher competency and teacher identity of the context in which teaching takes place and of the place of professional socialisation in the work lives of beginning teachers. However, this view of the context of teaching is almost invariably that of one school and it is the characteristics of the school environment which surrounds and encloses the teacher that are traditionally examined for their positive or negative contributions to teacher experience. This study extends this concept of "context" to take into account the Australian context in which most beginning teachers start their careers, that is, the employment context itself, which for many beginning teachers provides no surrounding or enclosing environment in which they are able to experience teaching. The effect of personal and professional uncertainty occasioned by teaching outside the security of a single school context is explored in this study and as such, adds a broader dimension to current understandings of the context of teaching and of the place of professional socialisation in teachers' work lives.

*Extending understanding of the knowledge base of teaching*

This study seeks to extend understanding of the knowledge base of teaching by examining the complexity of teacher development from a number of perspectives. The literature provides considerable insight into the effects of professional practice, professional socialisation, and professional identity negotiation on the development

of discrete aspects of teacher knowledge. However, there are few opportunities in the literature to examine a view of the knowledge base of teaching which interweaves these activities and thereby represents the composite of knowledge that teachers must draw on in the act of teaching. This study explores these activities and the concomitant domains of knowledge—personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher—and identifies the symbiotic connections between activities and domains, together with the iterative, interdependent and interactive nature of the process of development of teaching knowledge. In doing so, it proposes a view of the development of teacher knowledge in beginning teachers which is not readily found in the literature.

*Extending understanding of the “stages” of the teaching career*

The experiences of beginning teachers are usually encapsulated in stage-based models of the teaching career either explicitly, as in the work of Huberman and Berliner, or implicitly in the very notion prevalent in the literature that “beginning teachers” are in some way set apart from teachers in general. This is a view of teachers’ careers which is also maintained (often implicitly) by schools and systems in terms of salary scales and employment benefits and responsibilities, often to the detriment of early career teachers. This study reviews the phase-based and stage-based conceptions of teachers’ careers and extends these conceptions of career development in two ways.

Firstly, it adds to the discussion of experience and expertise of newly qualified teachers by moderating the construct of “experience” to incorporate that of “experience-in-context”. This study suggests that “experience-in-context” can determine the progression of teachers from one stage to another and, in cases of insecure and fragmented contexts, can disrupt the suggested forward linearity of extant models to provoke a situation where teachers regress in knowledge and skills. This study supports stage-based theories and models which regard experience (length of time teaching) as a necessary, but emphatically not sufficient, factor in teacher development. However, it extends this theory and modelling to suggest that experience-in-context better represents this aspect of teacher development in contemporary Australian settings as it is the aspect of employment context which

appears to significantly impact on teacher development, both positively and negatively.

Secondly, the study explores the way in which teachers move through stages of development and cross putative “boundaries” between “stages”. The study considers the factors which influence cognitive and social learning and which beginning teachers report as they reflect on what they have learned and how they have changed in the course of the first two years of their careers.

### *Matching research methodology to the work lives of beginning teachers*

This study is significant in that it built on the professional experience of the researcher and explored research methodologies which took account of the specific personal, emotional and cognitive understandings of teaching with which participant beginning teachers struggled during the early months of teaching. In this research, data gathering methods were used which provided opportunity for teachers often lacking in confidence and beset by initial confusion to explore their own progress without significant impositions on teacher time. Providing multiple site-based opportunities and mechanisms for reflection allowed teachers to offer multiple layers of understanding of their own experience at a time when this experience was new, frequently unintegrated with previous academic learning, problem-oriented and concerns-based and not easily articulated. This model of research methodology suggests that work with beginning teachers needs to take careful account of their professional insecurity and of their need to find ways to report new and unfamiliar personal experiences if the resulting data are to have high levels of trustworthiness and, therefore, validity.

### *Significance for Educational Practice*

Approximately 7-8000 beginning teachers emerge each year from teacher education institutions in Australia (Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs, 2003). As they move into the profession, their continuing development becomes the responsibility of local schools with secondary responsibility often accepted by employing systems and local educational organisations. Beginning

teachers require significant support in the form of induction into a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), the opportunity for informal and formal learning through collegial support and mentoring, the opportunity to enact theories of education in ongoing reflection on classroom practice, and the opportunity to perceive a career path which confirms personal and professional identity. At present, this support is available to too few beginning teachers and the majority experience their initial years of teaching with less than optimal support.

### *Significance for Educational Policy*

The study has significance for those working in educational policy areas in three fields: firstly, for those responsible for the accreditation and teaching of pre-service education courses; secondly, those responsible for teacher quality and the professional development of in-service teachers; and thirdly, those responsible for strategic decision-making in workforce planning.

### *Teacher education*

Teacher education courses currently prepare teachers for the responsibilities of school-based and class-based teaching and this study suggests that teachers exiting these courses currently come into the workforce well prepared for this role. However, they also come into the workforce with expectations of working with one class of students within a cohesive school context. This research sought to explore this aspect of early career: whether or not frustration of expectation at early career entry was significant in teachers' career development and in particular, for their career commitment and professional identity.

### *Teacher quality*

With an increasing regime of accountability, increasing complexity of the teaching role, and an increasing rate of retirement of the system's most experienced teachers, the development of knowledge, skills and understanding of teaching practice in beginning teachers is important for the current, as well as the future, staffing of schools with highly qualified, highly skilled and professionally committed teachers. This study investigated whether the current practice of investing induction,

mentoring, accreditation and professional development resources primarily on those teachers who are permanently employed is an effective policy for the future staffing of NSW schools.

### *Workforce planning*

Current estimates of an annual rate of retirement from the teaching service of about four per cent of teachers—most of whom have significant levels of experience and expertise—suggest that their replacement is a key issue for the future of schools and students. Given the levels of attrition of beginning teachers, it is appropriate to revisit the issues which prompt the current high rates of attrition of beginning teachers.

This study examines again the issues of concern which beginning teachers face (Turner, 1994; Veenman, 1984; Watzke, 2007); but it also investigates a further level of concern, that is, the implications for schools and educational authorities of the existence of a body of potential teachers who come into schools with experience but with little of the assumed development that such experience until now has typically indicated.

### *Structure of the Thesis*

The structure of this thesis is contained within a further six chapters: Literature Review (chapter 2); Methodology (chapter 3); Results: Research Question 1 (chapter 4); Results: Research Question 2 (chapter 5); and Results: Research Question 3 (chapter 6); and Discussion: Findings, Implications and Recommendations (chapter 7).

The Introduction is followed by a chapter in which the literature pertaining to the experiences of beginning teachers is considered in both its historical context and in the context of current Australian research into the changing contexts of beginning teachers' work lives. In addressing the first research question, this chapter examines the literature surrounding the concept of teacher professional knowledge and examines the three-fold construction of teacher knowledge which forms the basis of this thesis. The literature associated with disparate conceptions of teacher knowledge is critiqued and drawn together to form a model of knowledge which more closely

reflects the complexity of knowledge required by teachers in contemporary classrooms. The second research question is addressed primarily from the data obtained from the survey-questionnaire and interviews and acknowledges the paucity of literature on the experience of non-permanent beginning teachers. However, the nuances of professional experience revealed in these data will be related to the literature where appropriate. The third research question is addressed by a similar process of integrating the research findings with those drawn from the literature concerning professional socialisation, professional identity and practical knowledge of teachers with respect to the application of these concepts to beginning teachers' learning.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology of the thesis. The research approach and research design are described in more detail, exploring the descriptive case study which frames the research. This chapter also provides detailed information on the data gathering and data analysis methods used to promote deep understanding of the experiences reported by the study's participants, that is, semi-structured focus and individual interviews, construction of graphic organisers (concept maps and Plus-Minus-Interesting (PMI charts), participant observation, artefact and document analysis and photographic stimulated recall within the collective case study together with a cross-sectional attitude survey-questionnaire.

In chapters 4, 5 and 6 the results obtained from both the interviews and related data gathering methods and the survey-questionnaire are examined with reference to each of the research questions respectively. The final chapter, chapter 7, details discussion of the findings and conclusions and presents suggestions for further research.

### *Summary of Chapter 1*

This chapter has provided an overview of the research topic, the research process and the significance of the study, together with an outline of the structure of the thesis. It has set the research in the context of extant literature and also has outlined the changes in contemporary teaching that suggest a need for an extension of the literature in relation to the experiences of beginning teachers. The chapter has delineated the conceptual framework of the research project in relation to teacher

knowledge and teacher development and considered the significance of the research for educational policy and practice.

The following chapter comprises a review of the literature concerning beginning teachers and the process of learning to teach. The review begins with an historical survey of the incorporation of beginning teacher research into that of research into stages of teacher work-lives and discussions of teacher expertise and teacher knowledge. It then considers the literature pertaining to the contexts in and processes by which beginning teachers acquire professional knowledge and critiques the work of researchers who have investigated the process of practical knowledge acquisition, professional socialisation and professional identity formation.



## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### *Introduction*

This study investigates the processes by which beginning teachers in New South Wales (NSW), Australia, develop their knowledge of teaching once they have exchanged the role of tertiary student in pre-service teacher education courses for that of classroom teacher. It investigates as well the place of differences in the experiences of beginning teachers which can be attributed to differences in the employment context in which beginning teachers enter the profession, and the effect of such differences on their further development of the knowledge base of teaching.

### *Background and Context*

Australian beginning teachers, particularly in NSW, make the transition from student to teacher in a variety of teaching situations. While some are appointed to permanent positions in schools from the beginning of their teaching career, the majority begin their professional careers in an uncertain and often fragmented employment context as casual or substitute teachers, a status reflecting the day-to-day nature of their employment in a variety of classes and in a variety of schools. There has been a considerable literature developed in recent years concerned with the work lives of Australian teachers (Harrison, Allan, Phillip, & Reid, 2004; Kiggins, 2007; Kiggins & Gibson, 2001; McCormack & Thomas, 2003) but examination of the experiences of beginning teachers across these very different employment contexts has been missing. In addition, the process by which beginning teachers learn to teach in a range of fragmented employment contexts, compared with that of their colleagues in cohesive, stable and secure contexts, has been an area largely unexamined and unexplained and it is in these interstices in the understanding of the experience of Australian beginning teachers that the findings of this research project are located.

This chapter provides a review of the literature which underpins the investigation. It explores the way in which researchers in Australia and overseas have examined the experiences of beginning teachers over the past thirty years and considers the changes that have arisen in the interpretation of beginning teaching in that time. It

explores the concept of “context” in relation to the literature which is concerned with the influence of work-based context on beginning teachers’ experience of career entry. The chapter reviews the literature on the knowledge base of teaching. It explores the literature concerned with the professional activities and the related domains of knowledge that form the conceptual framework of this particular study. These are the activities of engagement in the practice of teaching and development of personal practical knowledge of teaching; participation in professional socialisation and development of knowledge of the context of teaching; and negotiation of professional identity in the quest for knowledge of self-as-teacher. In exploring the knowledge base of teaching, it also considers theories and models related to stages of development of teaching competence. This chapter examines also the areas of extant research about beginning teachers which require revisiting as a result of changes occurring in the field over the past three decades and links these to the focus of the research project.

### *Preliminary Investigation into the Field*

#### *Extent of the review*

Investigations into the experiences of beginning teachers proliferated with the rise to prominence of qualitative research methods in the last two decades of the twentieth century and for the most part were drawn from research published in the United Kingdom and the U.S. Australian research into beginning teachers came somewhat later (see, for example, Churchill and Walkington (2002) longitudinal study about learning to teach) and much of the available research in the early-2000s addressed very similar issues: the problems and concerns of beginning teachers as they negotiated their early career work (Khamis, 2000). The chronological extent of the literature reviewed for this study therefore extends to the work of researchers in the past thirty years while the geographical extent is related for the most part to the United Kingdom, U.S. and Australia.

*Initial literature scan*

A preliminary review of the available literature was undertaken, firstly, by reference to the book and journal collections of several university libraries and the National Library of Australia. In addition, electronic data bases (particularly Proquest, Academic Search Premier, Informaworld and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) as well as others available through EBSCOHost Education) were scanned for appropriate journal articles related to beginning teachers, teacher development and the knowledge base of teaching. This literature scan framed the initial focus of the research and as the research project extended beyond 2000, evidence of the mis-match between the literature and the contemporary experiences of research participants prompted further literature searches and an emerging awareness of the scope of this project for extending the literature base.

*Emerging Themes*

In the course of these excursions into the print and electronic media a number of themes became apparent in relation to the way in which researchers from 1980-2010 represented the experiences of beginning teachers and their learning (see, for example, Beattie, (2000), and Bullough, (1989, 1997; Bullough et al., 1992). These themes are outlined briefly below.

*Beginning teaching is a discrete stage in a teaching career*

During the 1980s and 1990s researchers such as Huberman (1989; Huberman et al., 1993) and Berliner (1995) identified the time of beginning teaching as a discrete phase or stage in the careers of teachers. This stage lasted for three to five years at the beginning of a career and was characterised by recognisable traits in teacher understanding and activity which distinguished early career teachers from mid- and later-career colleagues. In addition, commonalities of concerns and issues which arose at this point in a teacher's career were acknowledged (Berliner, 1995; Huberman, 1989). This research was founded on a change in methods of investigation of teacher knowledge and competency, relying on teacher perspective through the use of data gathering techniques based in qualitative research

methodologies rather than the positivist methodologies of earlier researchers (Bullough, 1989; Bullough et al., 1992). This literature provided explicit recognition of the dynamic nature of teachers' careers and, as well, recognition of the difference in practice (if not in professional responsibility) resulting in differences in learning needs between newly qualified and experienced teachers.

The literature on the early experiences of beginning teachers is considerable and much of it is descriptive, drawn from investigations into the experiences of beginning teachers in different schools, in different geographical and social locations and with different pre-service experiences. Despite these differences, there has emerged a convergence of concerns about both the "satisfiers" and the "dissatisfiers" (Boreham, 2005; Bullough et al., 1992), to use Herzberg's terms (Nias, 1981), that appear to inhere in the process of learning to teach. The focus of much of the current research, as in the previous two decades, is into a range of problems that are experienced by contemporary newly qualified teachers (Boreham et al., 2006). However, this later research has identified issues very similar to those identified in earlier research, suggesting that there has been little amelioration of the difficulties peculiar to the stage of beginning teaching over the past thirty years (Dyson, Albon, & Hutchinson, 2007; Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Lang, 1999; Veenman, 1984)

Shifting perceptions of beginning teachers' work lives in the past decade and an ongoing contemporary concern for effective work force planning in the face of rising attrition, resignation and retirement rates amongst teachers of varying levels of expertise have prompted a continuing interest in the work lives of beginning teachers (Ewing & Smith, 2003; Lang, 1999; Skilbeck & Connell, 2003). Whereas discussion of the problems faced by beginning teachers in the 1980s and 1990s was concerned with these experiences *per se*, they are now described in terms of their effect on newly appointed teachers' decisions to stay or to go, that is, on issues of retention and attrition. This concern is frequently further elaborated to include concern for the personal and professional "wastage" that occurs when beginning teachers find their transition to the profession not to their liking or their understanding (Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Cockburn, 2000; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Ewing & Smith, 2003;

Inman & Marlow, 2004; Kersaint et al., 2007; Robertson, Hancock, & Allen, 2006; Wilhelm et al., 2000).

Beginning teachers today enter teaching with considerable excitement mixed with considerable trepidation as the culmination of four years of study and sometimes half a life-time of thinking of themselves as teachers is about to be realised in a classroom. This study sought to explore the dichotomy of “discovery” and “survival” in relation to contemporary experience by considering the effect of the employment context on the mix of survival and discovery that beginning teachers in contemporary NSW experience. This project sought to explore also the effect of the current employment context on the extent to which the issues and concerns of beginning teachers identified in the literature persisted in the contemporary Australian context and whether or not the employment context comprised an additional layer of difficulty for some teachers.

*Experience and expertise are related but are not the same*

The literature referred to in the above section was developed alongside the emerging interest in models of teacher development which began to examine the links between experience and expertise with a view to “untangling” the concepts (Berliner, 1994; Desforges, 1995; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). Despite the fact that the terms were initially used interchangeably by Berliner and others (Berliner, 1986), later models of teacher development gave specific and separate meaning to the concepts of experience and expertise (Berliner, 1994, 1995, 2001). These concepts, rather than career phase duration, became the focus of stage-based models of teacher development and research intended to identify the specific knowledge, skills and understandings of teachers at specific levels of competency or expertise.

There is still a need to untangle the concepts of experience and expertise in school- and system-based educational practice, and in discussions of teacher development. This study applied the model of stages of teaching to the situation of contemporary beginning teachers in NSW, Australia, in order to test its applicability to the range of employment circumstances in which Australian teachers find themselves. The study sought to refine the extant conceptualisations of the early career stage to take into

account the effect of employment context as a necessary additional factor which may, through facilitating or militating against deliberate practice, contribute to or significantly hinder teacher development.

*The employment context is important in teachers' work lives*

The influence of context on beginning teachers' work lives has consistently been addressed in relation to the differences between different schools in which teachers are employed (Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Little & McLaughlin, 1993; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). The difficulties described by American and British researchers in regard to beginning teachers' issues in schools and classrooms were frequently replicated in the experiences of many Australian beginning teachers (Khamis, 2000), and observed links between contextual circumstances and attrition rates of beginning teachers emerged in the research literature of all three locations at a similar time (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Cockburn, 2000; Manuel, 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). However, there is little in the research which identifies the effect of the employment context itself on beginning teachers.

The most obvious effect of the changing employment context in Australia is the emergence of many more casual (or substitute) teachers into the workforce and the increasing number of these who are now beginning teachers. There is some research (McCormack & Thomas, 2002; Tromans, 2002) that addresses the concerns of beginning teachers in general from the point of view of casual beginning teachers, rather than teachers who have elected this form of teaching for lifestyle reasons. For the most part, casual beginning teachers remain almost invisible in research despite the fact that their concerns are similar to those reported in the literature and to those of their permanent colleagues but in many cases, remain less amenable to resolution.

There are significant gaps in the literature with respect to this issue. Firstly, the limited number of investigations into casual/relief/substitute teaching has tended to a focus on the often negative and discouraging experiences of these teachers and, at most, on identity negotiation rather than on knowledge and skill development (Galloway & Morrison, 1994; Junor, O'Brien, & O'Brien, 2004; Nidds & McGerald, 1994; Webb, 1992; Williamson et al., 1995). Secondly, there is little research which

attempts to identify the effect of casual employment on teacher development in early career or which considers the issue of learning to teach in these circumstances.

Thirdly, studies of beginning teaching continue to assume in the face of current workforce realities, that teaching begins in permanent, class-based positions in single schools. Many teachers wait many years for the opportunity to work with a class of their own and to belong to the community of one school, and studies which for the most part are limited to the experience and the concerns of beginning teachers in secure and continuing positions in schools (Churchill & Walkington, 2002; Cockburn, 2000; Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training, 2002; Manuel, 2003) are becoming less typical of the reality of most Australian beginning teachers' work lives.

Previous research defined contextual difference almost exclusively in terms of difference in school contexts (Berliner, 2001). Even where the influence of these differences was noted by researchers in Australia and overseas, this did not extend beyond the description of differences in the support provided by the school in which a teacher was employed. There was as yet no recognition of the effect of differentiated professional circumstances in initial employment experience that continue to pose additional difficulties for Australian beginning teachers and which remain largely unexamined by researchers. This project attempted to explore the question of the effect of employment context (as distinct from school context) on teacher development in recognition of the practical circumstance of increasingly limited opportunity for permanent employment which has beset beginning primary teachers in NSW for approximately the past decade.

### *Teacher knowledge can be codified*

Discussion of teacher knowledge was reinvigorated in 1986 by Shulman's contribution to the debate about the place of content knowledge in pedagogy (1986, 1987). Shulman described the knowledge base of teaching as a construct consisting of subject matter or content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Later researchers (Grossman, 1995; Hiebert, Gallimore, & Stigler, 2002; Reynolds, 1992; Reynolds, 1989; Turner-Bisset, 1999)

built on Shulman's work to attempt to make explicit what was often regarded as tacit knowledge.

This study sought to consolidate much of the conceptual work of previous research into the knowledge base of teaching in order to give more prominence to knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher and the interrelationships between these domains of knowledge and the professional activities (participation in professional socialisation and negotiation of professional identity) which engendered them. By re-integrating these types of knowledge with personal practical knowledge of teaching acquired as teachers engage in the practice of teaching, a more nuanced view of the teacher knowledge base was sought, one which more readily represented the dynamic and complex nature of teaching.

### *Thematic Links to the Research Project*

The above four themes were instrumental in establishing the research aim and in formulating the contributory research questions designed to address the aim. In addition, the development of the conceptual framework of the research study, based around conceptualisations of teacher knowledge and its development in early career were derived initially from the literature and developed by subsequent research. The following discussion links the background and context of the research and the research questions with a more detailed review of the literature pertaining to each.

### *Situating Research into Beginning Teaching: Career Cycles and Career Stages*

Much of the early "learning to teach" literature drew on that of sociology in considering the development of novice teachers in terms of the sociological tradition of life cycles (Huberman, 1989; Huberman et al., 1993). The careers of teachers were discussed in terms of a series of linear, successive and time-bound phases or stages akin to the life cycle stages of earlier research but linked, firstly, to the concept of "career" and secondly, to the specifics of teachers' careers. This body of literature identified these stages either chronologically, that is, by years of experience (Huberman, 1989) or, later, by level of competence (Berliner, 1995). The latter theoretical model moved beyond the life cycle research tradition to describe career



stages in terms of stages of competency which were only secondarily related to years of career experience.

Beginning teachers conform to both conceptions of career stage in that they constituted teachers in the first or novice phase of the career cycle, by both experience and stage or level of competence. This initial career phase tends to be seen as lasting for three to five years until the teacher is able to “stabilise” and engage in teaching from a repertoire of reliable instructional strategies (Huberman, 1995, p. 197). “Novice” and “Advanced Beginner” stages (Berliner, 1995) constitute the realm of the beginning teacher and the learning that takes place in the course of this stage of a teacher’s career is recognised as vital to the professional development of the newly qualified teacher (Bullough, 1997; Khamis, 2000; McCormack & Thomas, 2003).

In the following discussion, the term “phase” is used as Huberman represented it to suggest the time-based phases that characterised a teacher’s career progression, a progression that was considered to be generally equivalent to progression in competence. The term “stage” is used, following Berliner, to represent a stage of teacher development which is delineated by different levels of knowledge and skill rather than by career phase duration. In Berliner’s model, teachers may be at any one of the phases suggested by Huberman, but may not reach successive stages of competency unless time spent is complemented by other factors.

Huberman (1989) described the phase of induction into teaching as an “exploration” phase which typically was characterised by “discovery”—the excitement of initial entry into a profession, a school and a classroom - combined with a concern for “survival”. This latter concern arose out of the realisation that survival in the classroom depended on the ability to address a range of emergent concerns through the employment of a range of skills apparently only loosely related to those gained through tertiary study or practice teaching (p. 33). This exploration phase was also a time when the so-called “reality shock” (Huberman et al., 1993, p. 5; Veenman, 1984) set in and somewhat diminished the excitement, optimism and enthusiasm of discovery. Beginning teachers learned to “confront the complexity and simultaneity of instructional management and bridge the gulf between professional ideals and the

daily grind of classroom life” (Huberman, 1989, p. 33) as discovery in turn gave way to, or at best marched in tandem with, a focus on survival.

Huberman (1995) acknowledged that much of this research “tends to underestimate the importance of social and historical factors” (p. 194) and remains biological or psychological in origin. However, there is much to be gained by looking at the experiences that beginning teachers appear to have in common, across space, and over time, despite the “plateaus, discontinuities, regressions, spurts and dead ends” that may characterise individual career profiles (Huberman, 1995, p. 196).

Notwithstanding twenty years of further research, Huberman’s descriptions of the experiences of beginning teachers remain apt, albeit lacking in the contextual detail to be gained from an examination of the lived experiences of contemporary teachers.

The issues and concerns identified by Huberman still resonate with the experience of beginning teachers in Australia and similar issues and concerns are reported in contemporary Australian literature (Abbott-Chapman, 2005; Churchill & Walkington, 2002; Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training, 2002; Kiggins, 2007; Kiggins & Gibson, 2001; Watlington et al., 2004) as current concerns of beginning teachers. The acknowledgement in the literature of these concerns leads to a widespread acknowledgement of the importance of this introductory career phase to later teacher development. The “exploration” phase of a teacher’s career is the stage at which induction processes become important in the process of retaining those who have been appointed to schools. Skilbeck and Connell (2003) stressed the importance in the early phase of teaching of effective school-based processes of professional learning for beginning teachers: “the period of induction is a critical phase in establishing new teachers in the profession” (pp. 52-3). Similar views on the importance of effective induction in the first year of teaching were expressed by McCormack, Gore and Thomas (2006). However, this phase of teaching is also the time at which many teachers decide whether or not to continue in the profession beyond the first five to eight years (Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Marlow & Inman, 1997). Australian reports into teaching and teacher education during the past decade (Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training, 2002; House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and

Vocational Training, 2007; Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs, 2003; Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2004; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004; Preston, 2000; Skilbeck & Connell, 2003, 2004) extend the focus of the previous two decades and similar difficulties of induction are canvassed although the prior lack of opportunity for induction for teachers who are not continuously employed in schools is not yet addressed.

In recent years, research has focused on the maintenance of the teaching profession at a time when there is increasing attrition of beginning teachers from the profession and simultaneously, the actual and anticipated retirement of a large proportion of the teaching workforce by 2012 (Ewing & Manuel, 2005). As concerns have been raised about the difficulty of retaining beginning teachers in the profession (Cockburn, 2000; Deal, White, & Reilly, 2009), the focus of research into the ways in which beginning teachers perceive their initial experiences has altered. Current research draws attention to ways that may ensure that teachers develop confidence in their ability to teach and identity as teaching professionals and hence continue beyond the current three to five year period which now characterises the career duration of up to 40 per cent of beginning teachers (Manuel, 2003).

### *Career Stages, Experience and Developing Competency*

The biological determinism of the life cycles research, and to some extent, that of the early research into time-based career stages (Huberman, 1989), suggested that there was an implicit link between the time spent at each stage and the level of expertise acquired: each “phase” represented a new level of attainment of knowledge, understanding and skill. The acknowledgement that the number of years of experience was not always a sufficient source of increasing expertise led to a body of theoretical modelling which suggested that the nexus between experience and expertise was insufficient explanation for the development of teacher competency. Berliner (1995) took the concept of “stages” further, defining career stages in terms of the acquisition of particular competencies, skills, understandings and knowledge. Berliner recognised that experience (that is, years spent in the classroom) was a significant and necessary factor in the acquisition of such competencies; however, it

was not to be regarded as the only, or even the defining, factor in developing new competencies and thus moving to more advanced levels of expertise.

Berliner's model characterised the stages through which teachers pass as stages based on demonstrated accomplishment which may also be coincident with time-determined phases in a career (especially in early career) but represented, more importantly, a level of attainment which was the result of "extensive deliberate practice" (Berliner, 2001, p.465). Berliner linked time phases to stages of competence, as Huberman had, in that time teaching was the necessary environment for deliberate practice; but he also observed that there was no necessary progression from one stage of competence to the next simply by the passage of years (Berliner, 1995, p. 46).

In the work on stages of teaching careers, the "Exploration" phase of Huberman's research coincides with the "Novice" and "Advanced Beginner" stages of Berliner's model. Although particular stages of competence were frequently observed by Huberman in teachers at particular phases of experience, Berliner (1995) observed that some teachers, despite years in the profession, did not move beyond the novice stage while others moved relatively quickly to competency. In exploring the relationship between experience and expertise, he observed that "experience alone certainly will not make a teacher an expert, but it is likely that almost every expert pedagogue has had extensive classroom experience" (p. 49). Reflecting on the research of Huberman in 1985, Berliner (1986, p. 12) stated "lengthy experience [is] necessary to solve problems of classroom organization and management in sensible ways." Both Huberman and Berliner accepted that the length of time to move from the novice stage to one of developing competency would most likely be "no less than five years" (Berliner, 1986, p. 12; Huberman et al., 1993).

### *Career stages and teacher knowledge*

Beginning teaching, as a discrete career stage, is well-recognised in the literature and the skills observed in beginning teachers have been delineated by writers concerned with both chronological phases of the career (Fessler, 1995; Huberman, 1989) and with stages in the development of expertise (Berliner, 1995). However, description or

analysis of what beginning teachers (as distinct from more expert and more experienced colleagues) know is a rarity and most discussions of teacher knowledge assume a common and somewhat static knowledge base, acquired in pre-service teacher education courses, adapted through in-service professional development and mediated in classroom practice by reflection on experience and the development of case knowledge (Shulman, 1986, 1987). There is little empirical data that identifies any substantive difference between beginning teachers' knowledge base and that of more expert colleagues and even the delineation of "standards" of teaching by various teacher registration boards. For example, the Professional Teaching Standards of the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSW Institute of Teachers, n.d.-b) requires similar types of knowledge, expressed through different activities for teachers at different levels of experience or responsibility in teaching. What appears to vary is the capacity of teachers of greater expertise to organise, integrate and apply the various components of the knowledge base to solve increasingly complex emergent problems. Shulman (1986) termed this form of knowledge "strategic knowledge", an amalgam of case knowledge and propositional knowledge (pp. 12-13). Squires (1999) later referred to the same phenomenon as "pattern matching" (p. 125). Beginning teachers enter teaching with considerable propositional knowledge (knowing about or knowing that); what in fact requires considerable development in the experience of classroom teaching is procedural knowledge (knowing how) and pedagogical reasoning (knowing why), skills which are more characteristic of later career stages in Berliner's model.

### *Career stages and teacher learning*

Discussion about the difference between novice and expert in teaching, in terms of the knowledge base observable at each stage whether related to stages of competency or more simply, career phases, remains essentially "an analytic heuristic...a descriptive rather than a normative construct" (Huberman, 1989, p. 32). The characteristics of each "stage" in a teacher's career can be identified in general but there is little discussion in the literature of the process, apart from the use of extensive and deliberate practice, by which knowledge is, firstly, acquired and then embedded, adapted and built upon in a beginning teacher's classroom practice in

order to progress from one stage to the next. Stage theory provides guidelines as to the potential direction of teacher learning, the anticipated professional knowledge “end points” at each phase or stage of a teacher’s career, and the characteristics of an acceptable knowledge base, but there is little information provided apart from experience embodied in deliberate practice to provide guidance as to how the development process can be facilitated, despite the acknowledgement that experience *per se* is not sufficient. Stage theory provides an understanding of the issues which arise in the process of learning to teach but these models need to be accommodated to the work on situated learning (Edwards, 2005; Fuller, Unwin, Felstead, Jewson, & Kakavelakis, 2007; Herrington, Herrington, Kervin, & Ferry, 2006; Wenger, 1998) in order to incorporate a greater understanding of the process of teacher learning.

Consideration of career “stages” in teaching, however, provides a starting point for examining the experience of career entry as a discrete set of experiences, issues and concerns which require addressing if they are to provide a solid foundation for a continuing, satisfying and effective career in teaching. Despite the “age” of this research, many of its findings are still current and are reflected in the narratives of present-day beginning teachers and it is for this reason that this literature forms the basis of an introduction to this study of the issues, concerns and work lives of beginning teachers as they engage in professional practice. It is the purpose of this study to extend this research and take into account the contextual changes that now exacerbate the issues experienced by beginning teachers and identified by the researchers of two decades ago.

### *Career stages and teaching context*

By 2000, there was some acknowledgement of the role of context and culture in the development of teacher knowledge in the progression to increased teaching competence. Context at this time was defined in terms of the type of working environment provided by the teacher’s school and was recognised as significant in teacher development by researchers such as Fessler (1995), Bullough (Bullough & Baughman, 1995) and Berliner (2001). However, there remained an assumption—realistic at the time of writing—that this context involved work as a teacher of a particular class of students within a particular school and differences in context were

delineated according to the extent of provision of support for beginning teachers provided by the individual school. Broader conceptualisations of teaching context to include a wider variation of teaching situations were not as yet developed in the research.

### *Research Questions and Related Literature*

In formulating this research, three questions were addressed as a means of structuring a discussion of what beginning teachers know, how they come to know, and what conditions make a difference to both what they know and how they come to know. In particular, this research aimed to establish the effect of the employment context on the development of the teacher knowledge base and, in doing so, both utilised and extended the themes of the literature addressed above.

#### *Research Question 1*

What changes in teacher knowledge were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching?

In addressing this question, the literature concerning the knowledge base of teaching was examined. Although there is rarely any distinction in the literature between the knowledge base of teachers in general and that of beginning teachers, the typologies of teacher knowledge provided a useful framework for understanding beginning teachers' foundational knowledge. This research project, in attempting to broaden the conceptualisation of teacher knowledge, also examined the types of knowledge engendered by participation in the process of socialisation (knowledge of the context of teaching) and that developed in the process of negotiating professional identity (knowledge of self-as-teacher) which were well developed in the literature, but rarely strongly connected.

#### *Changing conceptualisations of the knowledge base of teaching*

The concept of a knowledge base of teaching is a contested one, located in varying epistemologies and research traditions (Desforbes, 1995) and in the difficulties of recognising, articulating, representing and documenting it (Loughran, 2003). Within

the research literature, knowledge of teaching and knowledge for teaching have come to be regarded as propositional and procedural, tacit and explicit, formal and informal, and located in contexts and systems as well as in individual cognition.

In 1986, Shulman changed the direction of research into teacher knowledge, establishing categories of teacher knowledge that continue to resonate in other research into what teachers know and how such knowledge is enacted as “craft knowledge” or knowledge-in-practice (Berliner, 1991; Leinhardt, 1990). Shulman’s typology of teacher knowledge continues to frame discussions of teacher knowledge twenty years on (Skilbeck & Connell, 2003, p. 78).

According to Shulman (1986, 1987) the knowledge base on which teachers drew to engage in effective practice in classrooms comprised a number of elements all of which needed to be integrated into a system of knowledge, skills and strategies in order to provide a basis for the multiple occurrences of planning, responding and decision-making that occur throughout the teaching day. This body of knowledge included subject matter or content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and Shulman’s new construct, pedagogical content knowledge—the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others” together with an understanding of the likely response of students to the topic—which was theorised to bridge the content-pedagogy dichotomy (1986, pp. 9-10). Shulman proposed that the professional knowledge base, and the curriculum of pre-service teacher education programs which sought to develop it, should include rather than assume specialised subject knowledge together with an understanding of the substantive and syntactic structures of the discipline.

In addition, Shulman advocated extending conceptions of teacher knowledge to include three forms of teacher knowledge: propositional knowledge, case knowledge and strategic knowledge, the form of knowledge which would allow a teacher to make a reasoned decision in practice based on knowledge derived from an understanding of both propositions and cases. Strategic knowledge, compounded of propositional and case knowledge and based on both content and pedagogic knowledge became then the basis for the development of professional judgement, “the hallmark of any learned profession” (Shulman, 1986, p. 13), the capacity to



know not only how, but why particular actions are taken in the often unpredictable and ever-changing context of a classroom. In so defining the content of professional judgement, Shulman recognised that teacher knowledge is not confined to observable and predictable behaviours or –skills” but is rather both complex and multi-faceted combining both explicit and tacit knowledge, skills developed in the classroom over time, and understandings derived initially from teacher education programs adjusted by the exigencies and revelations of classroom experience.

Shulman’s typology was later extended from three domains to six (1987) and further extension of the typology by Grossman (1995) included knowledge of content, of learners and learning, of general pedagogy, of curriculum, of context and of self. In addition to Shulman’s and Grossman’s categorisation of teacher knowledge as a cognitive construct, other researchers sought to include a personal dimension to teacher knowledge by drawing attention to the images of teachers and teaching which teachers hold (Clandinin, 1986). In addition, other researchers had focused on the role of teachers’ experiential knowledge, values and beliefs (Elbaz, 1983) and on the place of identity negotiation in the development of professional understanding (Coldron & Smith, 1999; Helsby, 1995; Nias, 1986). Still others sought to explore the role of the school context in the development of teacher knowledge (Bullough, 1997; Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Little & McLaughlin, 1993).

However, these descriptions, theories and models tended to be independent of each other and the reciprocity of contextual knowledge, knowledge of self-as-teacher and practical knowledge rarely was addressed. As researchers such as Wenger (1998) grappled with conceptions of situated learning in communities of practice, other researchers also engaged with the concept of the influence of context on teacher learning. Contextual knowledge was included in the knowledge base by researchers such as Bullough and Grossman and later by Shulman & Shulman (2004) as they sought to integrate the cognitive perspective of the earlier work with recent advances in understanding of situated learning. This research was, however, still related to a context which was static in terms of location of school and of class within school.

*Research Question 2*

What personal and professional factors may have contributed to differences in teachers' experience of beginning teaching?

In addressing this research question, the present study examines the circumstances which were initially considered (from the professional experience of the researcher) as possible contributors to differences in the experiences and thus in the development of beginning teachers. The literature concerning beginning teachers acknowledges that different teachers experience their initial years of teaching differently and often idiosyncratically; however, there is little research that seeks to explore the commonalities in experience or to explain these differences, even tentatively. In attempting to find possible explanations for difference in the development of the teachers represented in this study, the literature that pertained to a range of both personal factors and professional circumstances was reviewed.

*Examining the concept of personal attributes*

The literature which engages with discussions about the influence of personal attributes on teacher experience is mostly concerned with matters of age and prior experience, especially the experiences of mature-aged and career change teachers (Anthony & Ord, 2007; Quintrell & Maguire, 1998; Trent & Gao, 2009). As well, a considerable literature is now developing on the difficulties of attracting male teachers to primary education (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2004). However, this literature in the main delineated the difficulties experienced by these teachers and made few links to teacher knowledge and teacher development.

*Examining the concept of professional circumstances*

In the literature, professional circumstances were usually represented in terms, again, of the difficulties experienced by beginning teachers in relation to classroom practice and school contextual support (Booth & Runge, 2005; Boreham et al., 2006; Kiggins, 2007; Kiggins & Gibson, 2001; Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Lang, 1999; Waldsorf & Lynn, 2002). There is a burgeoning literature on the effect of location on teachers

and teaching (Cowley, 1999; Somerville, Plunkett, & Dyson, 2010; Williams, 2002) and on the difficulties caused by the lack of full teacher status (Crittenden, 1994; Junor et al., 2004; Tromans, 2002; Webb, 1992). There is, however, little differentiation within the research literature between experienced and inexperienced teachers in these situations or between those who choose particular teaching situations and those who are forced into them by the prevailing employment context.

### *Research Question 3*

How did differences in teachers' experience affect the development of their knowledge base of teaching?

In order to address this question, the contemporary literature on employment of teachers was examined to ascertain both the trends in initial employment and the effect on the development of teacher knowledge of the employment experience. Investigation was then focused around the difference in experience of teachers who began their careers in secure and stable employment circumstances and those who began in uncertain and fragmented circumstances and the way in which these different experiences impacted upon teachers' engagement in the practice of teaching, their participation in professional socialisation and their negotiation of professional identity.

In the 1980s, the research focus into the development of teacher competency shifted from an earlier focus on the observed, overt classroom behaviour of teachers to a focus on the "cognitive and affective aspects of teachers' professional lives" (Calderhead, 1996, p. 709) as described by teachers themselves in the context of their own classroom and school experience. This focus on appreciating the development of teacher knowledge through examination of teachers' work lives was followed by a large number of biographical and case studies of the process of acquiring and reconstructing teacher knowledge (Bennett & Carré, 1993; Bullough, 1997; Bullough et al., 1992; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Elbaz, 1983). These studies identified a number of individual cognitive processes by which teachers learned their craft knowledge of teaching.

*Engaging in the practice of teaching*

As suggested in the literature, the development of the knowledge base of teaching is an intensely individual and practical process, arising from the interaction of planned classroom experience and necessary improvisational performance (Livingston & Borko, 1989, p. 37) to find “what works,” mediated by the process of reflection on and in action (Schön, 1983, 1987).

Research into the knowledge base of teaching has been a long-standing focus of much of the literature about learning to teach. In 1987, Shulman had further refined and extended his conception of the knowledge base of teaching to include content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts and knowledge of educational purposes (Shulman, 1987, p. 8). Teachers acquire practical knowledge of teaching through interpreting information and classroom events in the light of existing knowledge and beliefs and within particular, meaningful contexts and cultures, making changes in both mental organisation and in subsequent action as a result of this interpretive action. As such, the issue for those beginning the journey to competency as accredited teachers is one of integrating these varying components of the knowledge base into a coherent, accessible framework capable of sustaining professional engagement and satisfaction over time.

*Engaging in reflective practice.* The literature on the beginning teacher approaches the issue of transition from novice to competent teacher from a number of different standpoints. While research of the 1960s and 1970s tended to draw inferences about teacher competency and teacher knowledge from observations by researchers of teachers at work, the literature of the 1980s and 1990s sought to locate the teacher, whether beginning or expert, as a professional, able to develop his/her own knowledge of teaching from a process of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983, 1987). Teachers in these later studies are seen as “agents in the development of their own practice” (Calderhead, 1987, p. 5). In this body of research, the development of “personal practical knowledge” (Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Elbaz, 1983) is regarded as an outcome of the

interaction of a variety of factors arising from the personal, institutional and cultural spheres. Research into the integration of the outcomes of reflection on practice with knowledge about teaching allowed for the development of understandings of the way in which teachers improved their teaching through an individual meta-cognitive process based in pedagogical reasoning and judgement, theoretical learning and practical experience.

The advent of the latter forms of research focusing on teacher self-reflection on the knowledge, beliefs, images and experiences that underlay teachers' classroom practice gave prominence and validity to the meaning which teachers themselves constructed from the sum of their own classroom experiences and was the basis from which the teacher was seen as the active agent in the ongoing and incremental development of expertise in professional knowledge from experience. Bullough (Bullough et al., 1992) refers to this approach as providing the basis of research which respects the autonomy of the teacher and his/her own role in the development of his/her knowledge of teaching. In this, Bullough draws a contrast with other studies in which the teacher is seen to be an implementer of techniques to be mastered but where the techniques have been identified by others apart from the teacher. Research based on this more teacher-centred approach sought to understand the "content, organization and development of teachers' craft knowledge" (Calderhead, 1987, p. 23) from the point of view of teachers themselves as they reflected and reported on their own lived experience in schools and classrooms.

*Responding to cognitive dissonance.* The literature concerning the process of learning to teach is characterised by attempts to categorise and describe the knowledge possessed by teachers and the ways in which this knowledge is, firstly, acquired and secondly, developed. Borko and Putnam (1996) in discussing the development of novice teachers considered that "the accumulation of richly structured and accessible bodies of knowledge allows individuals to engage in expert thinking and action" (p. 674). Furthermore, they maintained that teachers, like their students, acquired knowledge through interpreting information and events in the light of existing knowledge and beliefs and within particular meaningful contexts and

cultures, making changes in both mental organisation and in subsequent action as a result of this interpretive action.

In considering the process of moving from novice to expert teacher, Livingston and Borko (1989) drew from the field of cognitive psychology to consider the role of schema theory in stimulating beginning teachers' thinking and learning. They described a schema as "an ordered representation of objects, episodes, actions or situations that contain slots or variables into which specific instances of experience in a particular context can be fitted" (Livingston & Borko, 1989). Schema theory provided a way of modelling conceptions of both what teachers "know" and how such knowledge is organised and reconstructed in the process of engaging in teaching practice.

This approach theorised that beginning teachers reconstructed their knowledge and, therefore, their practice, in response to the cognitive dissonance which arose in response to unexpected events within classrooms. Researchers described the capacity to reconstruct schemas of teaching and teachers in response to cognitive dissonance as a process developed through a process of reflection on, in and for action as teachers work in schools and classrooms (Anderson, 1989). This in turn accorded with the work of Berliner and others in identifying the prompting of problem solving as the cognitive mechanism for the reconstructing of knowledge, beliefs and practice in moving from novice to expert.

Schema theory offered an explanation for the difference in teaching practice between that of expert and that of beginning teachers based on the conceptualisation of teaching as itself a "complex cognitive skill that is determined in part by the nature of a teacher's knowledge system" (Carter, 1987, p. 149). According to this theory, the comparative simplicity of the schemata possessed by novice teachers means that beginning teachers spend large amounts of time planning from their existing knowledge base in order to anticipate the events of teaching but when the unexpected arises they may not initially have the pedagogical reasoning skill to successfully improvise in response to the unplanned occurrence.

*Re-visiting beliefs about teaching and teachers.* Wilson and Berne (1999) suggested that teacher knowledge is developed by a form of thinking or “pedagogical reasoning” (p. 118) which allows teachers to reflect on and evaluate the transformation of teaching to learning, and to reason towards improvement based on consideration of the concept of pedagogical content knowledge. Other researchers such as Bullough (1994) had focused on the capacity of beginning teachers to restructure their beliefs about and their images of teaching in response to classroom events. His many studies of first year teachers in varying contexts identified similar issues: the impact on self-images and metaphors of the realities of classroom events and the requirement for first year teachers to establish classroom management and routines, develop instructional routines, develop a growing knowledge of students and a focus on pupil learning, and simultaneously allow these tasks to impact on the reconstruction of images, beliefs and metaphors.

In summary, the process of accomplishing the developmental tasks of learning to teach can be variously described as dependent on the clarity of image of self as teacher and of students as learners (Calderhead, 1987; Calderhead, 1996); the readiness to respond to cognitive dissonance and to reconstruct images and metaphors of teaching and teachers (Borko & Putnam, 1995; Grossman, 1995; Shulman, 1986); the configuration of pre-service education in relation to the exposure of the teacher to opportunities to gain knowledge of students and of instructional routines; the connectedness between what was learned in pre-service training to the knowledge and skills required in the practicum; and the experience of practice teaching and the classroom and school contexts in which teaching begins. These processes involve the development of pedagogical reasoning and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), the reconstruction of realistic and useful images of self as teacher and learner (Calderhead & Gates, 1993); and the construction of more elaborate schemata in relation to students, scripts and routines related to instruction and management (Livingston & Borko, 1989). These processes comprise many of the activities within which beginning teachers experience the development of their own personal knowledge base of teaching.

*Participating in professional socialisation*

The place of a secure context in the learning of novice teachers is a matter taken for granted in most discussions of beginning teaching.

*The place of context in teacher development.* Studies on the process of developing competency or expertise (Berliner, 1995; Eraut, 1994) suggest that initial competency in a specialised domain such as teaching depends on the acquisition of knowledge about that domain gained over a time span of (some suggest) at least five years (Berliner, 2001). Furthermore, time spent in deliberate practice that allows the practitioner to collect and synthesise cases, and to observe, interpret and apply patterns is required. Eraut, (cited in Squires, 1999) locates the beginnings of expert practice in deliberate practice involving the “replication, application, interpretation and association” which each teacher is able to bring to classroom settings in which the context is relatively stable and occurrences can be interpreted against a background of similar cases, and knowledge of “what works” (p. 125). Expert knowledge is therefore partly situational knowledge, deliberately practised and influenced significantly by what Berliner (2001) calls “the power of context”:

Policies from the principals, superintendents and school board, along with the expectations of the community, determine the organization of a school and its climate. These policies subtly, but powerfully affect teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, enthusiasm, sense of efficacy, conception of their responsibilities and teaching practices. ..It is probably the power of context followed by deliberate practice, more than talent, which influences a teacher’s level of competency (p. 466).

Desforges (1995) suggests that for individual teachers to continue learning, the school should be seen as the learning unit. Citing Seashore-Lewis, he outlines

... the features of organisations which are essential to the sustenance of learning individuals. These include decentralisation of information to provide multiple points at which individuals can gain access; dense communication networks affording many opportunities for discussion of ideas; visionary leadership allowing for re-definitions of central objectives and useful feedback, that is to say, learners must have swift access to feedback on performance which is meaningful (p. 397).



Knowledge of the context of teaching develops as teachers participate in professional socialisation and become familiar with the physical, cultural and social contexts in which they develop personal practical knowledge of teaching and their own professional identity. It is a process which contains both the context and some of the content of their learning, as knowledge of social and political systems, both micro- and macro-, has enduring effects on a teacher's understanding of the requirements of the profession and the culture of the school, and the potentialities and limitations which both can place on the way in which a teacher develops practical knowledge and negotiates professional identity. Street (2004) draws the connection between the support provided by a school and teacher development: "Reflecting on their attitudes, goals and early teaching experiences with the help of a mentor allows new teachers greater insight into their practice and, thus, more control over their professional identities" (p. 10).

Schools provide first and foremost, the experience of teaching children; in addition, they provide the role models who are largely responsible for the induction of newcomers into the organisation's tacit knowledge (Filstad, 2004). Experienced colleagues within schools also supply informal and "just-in-time" advice and support, and assist new teachers to navigate the social setting and the micro-politics of the school with which all teachers need to learn to contend (Blase, 1997; Street, 2004). For many Australian beginning teachers, accessing a school which can provide a stable environment for the development of teacher knowledge and understanding of the culture of teaching represents the first and most difficult step in the journey which each takes in developing a realistic view of self-as-teacher.

The key to successful first year teaching, whether in permanent, temporary or casual teaching, appears to be the formal and informal support that teachers receive at the level of the school itself. Manuel (2003) identifies several key features which beginning teachers attribute to good induction programs: pastoral care, professional development targeted to the needs of beginning teachers, guidance in career planning, professional development of experienced staff in mentoring and supporting new teachers, and links with universities which ensure that learning is continuous. However, the provision of induction programs and of mentoring is reported in much

of the literature as problematic (Ewing & Smith, 2003) and beginning teachers frequently report the absence of effective support.

*Induction and teacher development.* For beginning teachers, induction processes at the school are complemented by system-provided “induction courses” which tend to focus on systemic procedures, policies and priorities as well as providing information and opportunity for discussion on the issues of class teaching identified by participants. However, discussion and information provided at these venues still assumes knowledge and experience based on secure and ongoing teaching located in one school and on one’s own class and provides little or no acknowledgement of the difficulties of other types of teaching experience.

*Mentoring and teacher development.* Mentoring is often seen as the personal face of the formalised induction program, a process arising from the pressure on schools to create “collaborative cultures” where “collegial professionalism means working with, learning from, and teaching colleagues” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 51). In these cultures, mentors are colleagues who can work with new entrants to “show them the ropes, develop their competence and understanding, and help them fit in” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 52). At a time when even experienced teachers are coping with ongoing, unrelenting changes to the content and expectations of their roles (Abbott-Chapman, Hughes, & Williamson, 2001; Pietsch, Gardner, Myhill, Pietsch, & Williamson, 2009), the capacity to mentor newcomers effectively in areas in which they themselves are sometimes still novices may be limited.

*The location of teacher development: Communities of practice.* In the 1990s, the focus on individual construction of knowledge of teaching shifted somewhat to one which included the social construction of knowledge. According to Wenger (1998) and others (Bullough, 1989; Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Dyson et al., 2007; Kersaint et al., 2007) learning is a social, rather than an individual process, which should be done in the “context of our lived experience of participation in the world” (p. 3). Practice defines a community through mutual engagement in a joint task, participation in a joint enterprise and exercise of a shared repertoire of skills with which to undertake both tasks and enterprise. According to Wenger (1998), “practice resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement by which

they can do whatever they do” (p. 73). It is within this context that learning occurs based on the participant’s belonging to and participating in a community of practice, engaging in the practice of the community, defining meaning in terms of that recognised and upheld by the community and negotiating identity through continuous practice in the community and recognition by the community as a part of it. For individuals, “learning is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practice of their communities”; for communities, “learning is an issue of refining their practice and ensuring new generations of members” (pp. 7-9) and in sustaining communities within organisations, these organisations themselves are sustained.

Members of communities of practice experience competency and are recognised as competent and “identity... is produced as a lived experience of participation in specific communities” (Wenger, 1998, p. 151). Learning in a community of practice draws together the three key strands of acquiring practical knowledge, negotiating professional identity and participating in professional socialisation. The contribution of this theoretical framework to this study resides in the assumption of a community of practice as a site of professional learning: the lack of such a community of practice, and its provision of a site for the social construction of the knowledge base of teaching for beginning teachers in Australia has been little recognised in the literature.

The process of professional socialisation leads to an ongoing tension within the work lives of practising teachers between the autonomy of working within what are traditionally the private realms of classrooms, and the constraints of working within the wider institutional boundaries of schools, educational systems and communities. Huberman (1993) discusses the privacy of the classroom as necessitated by the way in which teachers work: “...there are factors at work in the context of conventional classroom life that impede the fluid transfer of public arrangements to private enactments” (p. 25). However, caution is needed in setting up too strict a dichotomy between the private and public realms of teaching. The realm of the classroom is not entirely private and autonomous, as teachers are required to fulfil school-based and system demands in relation to curriculum and student services. A teacher’s more public roles in the school, with colleagues and with the system are not entirely

constrained by outside demands and may to some extent, be influenced by private factors. In the work lives of teachers there remain large areas of autonomy and large areas of accountability to outside interests.

However, despite areas of overlap in these responsibilities, teachers remain substantially autonomous in the day-to-day interactions with students in their classroom. In addition teachers are significantly constrained by accepted policy and procedures in their day-to-day interactions with the school and system outside their classroom as well as in that large space wherein these fields—classroom, school and profession—intersect. Teacher development is to some extent the result of coming to terms with the tensions inherent in the dichotomy of autonomy and accountability.

Zeichner and Gore (1990) identified a ~~g~~rowing consensus in the field about the highly interactive nature of the socialisation process and about the constant interplay between choice and constraint in the process of learning to teach” (p. 339). They identify socialisation as primarily achieved through the agency of students in a teacher’s classroom and interaction with colleagues and, to a lesser extent, other agencies such as the institutions of the local and wider society. Within a classroom, the effect of students on teacher socialisation relies on their capacity within the classroom to enhance or restrict the role and pedagogical practice chosen by the teacher. ~~There~~ is little question that classroom influence is reciprocal in nature and that teachers’ perceptions of pupils’ characteristics, expectations, and behaviours influence the nature of teacher development” (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 339). This literature assumes though, that teachers have responsibility for the development of relationships with students over time; it is this assumption that can no longer be realised for a great many beginning Australian teachers as the classes they work in change too often to develop learning-related relationships with any of the students they teach.

### *Negotiating professional identity*

Professional identity appears to be an explanatory construct useful in attempting to identify what lies behind differentiation in teacher practice (Walkington, 2005). However, it remains one without accepted clarity and there are competing views on

its substance. It represents a way of explaining the effect on teacher decision-making and, therefore, on teacher practice, of beliefs, ideals and values (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000) and a way of describing a teacher's perception of the professional self. However, it is regarded also as something externally imposed—the values, mores and actions which the profession expects or requires of its members (Sachs, 2001). It is in both conceptions of identity that teachers come to understand their role and choose to assume it. It is grounded in both personality and experience, both of the profession and outside it and in the beliefs and values that inhere in both the personal and the professional realms. Researchers suggest that professional identity (the perception of self-as-teacher) is not separate from personal identity (self-as-person) but is intricately bound to it (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Nias, 1986). If identity constitutes “the dynamic configuration of the defining characteristics of a person” (De Ruyter & Conroy, 2002, p. 510) then teacher professional identity can be regarded as comprising those characteristics which define a teacher and which simultaneously differentiate a teacher from a member of a different profession (Watson, 2006; Wenger, 1998). What remains at issue is whether personal and /or professional identity is in essence personally constructed, or socially constructed, or a mix of both processes.

People choose to become teachers because of beliefs, values and experiences that inhere in personal lives. Once they are working as teachers, the experience of the profession may sustain, enhance, change or conflict with personal beliefs and values, concepts and images of both self-as-person and self-as-teacher, and beliefs, ideals and values about teaching and teachers. There may well be an overt and a covert “identity” (Nias, 1986): a covert identity where the personal beliefs and values that underlie professional action and define and sustain the identity of self-as-person and yet may remain active but unarticulated, and an overt identity where only those beliefs, ideals and values that are represented in accepted discourse and action for teachers are expressed.

Where these sets of beliefs, ideals and values are in tension, difficulties or dissatisfactions in practice may occur and may remain unacknowledged and therefore unremedied. Herein lies the significance of the construct in evaluating

mentoring and professional development programs for beginning teachers. At a stage where the personal process of negotiation of professional identity is only just beginning, programs of induction, mentoring and development need to proceed with due regard for the established personal identity and for the need to develop professional identity which coheres with the established personal values, philosophies and intentions of neophytes in the profession.

In this study, professional identity is considered to be a facet of personal identity. The self-as-person encompasses a multiplicity of facets, each one influenced by fundamental personal beliefs and values, knowledge and experience (Day et al., 2006). These in turn impinge on the professional facet, underlying and at times overriding the professional beliefs and values which guide specific decision-making and action in the workplace and which are acquired through the development of personal practical knowledge of teaching in the contexts of schools.

Beliefs and attitudes which teachers hold before coming into teaching and which are reinforced or elaborated on by the process of teacher training are derived from a number of pre-existing sources not least of which is the experience teachers have themselves had as students (Lortie, 1975) and the relationships experienced with significant others who taught the teacher during childhood. Beliefs and images are seen to provide a filter for the content of pre-service training and to remain as relatively inflexible components of professional knowledge once teachers enter their own classroom (Block & Hazelip, 1995; Nettle, 1998; Pajares, 1992).

The role of images, beliefs and metaphors is well recognised as a factor in either sustaining pre-existing ideas about practice or, when acknowledged, in providing a catalyst for change. Lortie (1975) had earlier identified pre-existing beliefs and attitudes which effected little change during teaching training and persisted into the professional stage as significant factors in the teacher socialization process. Other writers also identified biography as a powerful though not exclusive influence on the development of beliefs and attitudes, with pre-service training serving to reinforce and give form to the theoretical knowledge thus gained (Block & Hazelip, 1995). Similarly, Desforges (1995) expressed doubts about the degree to which teachers were able to reconstruct schemas from what he termed “anomalous data” and

claimed that “teachers appear to be blind to data inconsistent with their beliefs and practices” (p. 390).

From the literature, it is clear that beliefs and attitudes may produce conflicts and cognitive dissonance for the teacher when the practical situation belies the belief system. When teachers need to compromise beliefs in order to survive the “reality shock” of beginning teaching this in itself can encourage teachers to reflect on experience in the light of beliefs and assimilate, discard or accommodate new ideas which may not be consonant with existing beliefs (Bullough et al., 1992). Part of the task of novice teachers is, first, to confirm and validate their own beliefs and images before moving to modify, adapt and reconstruct them in the light of contrary evidence from classroom events and growing knowledge of students and classroom routines. Where dissonance is such that reconstruction is precluded, teachers’ commitment to the profession and their capacity to remain in it are placed at risk (Day et al., 2006).

*Developing a view of self-as-teacher.* Professional identity is “negotiated, open, shifting, ambiguous, the result of culturally available meanings and the open-ended, power-laden enactment of those meanings in everyday situations” (Sachs, 2001, p. 154). It also has to do with conforming to the culturally prescribed (and proscribed) norms of discourse of the groups in which teachers work, and it is in this sense that professional identity becomes a product of the process of professional socialisation occurring in school settings. In this view, “being a teacher is a matter of being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others; it is a matter of acquiring and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated” (Coldron & Smith, 1999, p. 712). However, it is a matter also for individual teachers who, in the course of their early career, need to reconcile what they now see as the role of the practising teacher with what they have until now perceived it to be. According to Bullough, Knowles and Crow (1992) beginning teachers “seek to establish a coherent and integrated professional identity that is consistent with the inner self” (p. 8). Connelly and Clandinin (1999) describe professional identity as a teacher’s “story to live by” (p. 95), multi-faceted, composed, sustained and changed in the course of a teacher’s life. Thus, professional identities are born and grow in the histories of teachers as they

teach but they are also an outworking of the beliefs and values held by teachers themselves.

*Schools and professional identity.* Whether professional identity is imposed by the profession, or self-created as teachers reflect on their practice, or a combination of these is a matter for debate. Nias (1986, p.3) suggested that ~~the~~ professional socialisation of teachers must be understood as an active process in which individuals seek to preserve within the school and the profession, their sense of personal identity.” Sachs (2001, p. 153), however, suggested that professional identity is ~~use~~ to refer to a set of externally ascribed attributes that are used to differentiate one group from another.” In these terms, teacher professional identity can be regarded as prescribed (and proscribed) behaviour pertaining to the role of teacher, and adopted by those who work as teachers. Schools provide the context in which professional identity is honed as teachers develop personal practical knowledge of teaching and, as well, an understanding of the culture of the school as both organisation and community in which they have membership; what is yet to be fully explored in the literature is the effect on the development of teacher identity of fractured participation in many schools and membership of none.

Like beliefs and attitudes, the metaphors embedded in the language which teachers use to explain their own perceptions of teaching and of the teacher are seen to have a strong influence both on how teachers initially approach the teaching role and how they subsequently interpret their experiences within it (Beijaard et al., 2000; Block & Hazelip, 1995; Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Such metaphors may in fact both articulate and inform the schema which teachers possess, and which they access in their response to classroom events. A novice’s images of both self-as-teacher and self-as-learner, together with images of students, act as a powerful determinant of early teaching style. Bullough (1994) acknowledges that success as a novice teacher comes from a strong image of self-as-teacher, an image which provides a basis for reflection on classroom experiences and subsequent preparedness to reconstruct both beliefs and practice. Knowing oneself as teacher constitutes a significant part of the growing knowledge base of the beginning teacher (Day et al., 2006). It is through being self-aware that teachers can identify



both constraints on and contributions to effective practice and knowledge growth from those aspects of their own personal and professional identity which bear on their development as teachers (De Ruyter & Conroy, 2002).

### *Summary of Chapter 2*

This chapter has provided a review of the literature related to the construction of a professional knowledge base by beginning teachers. It has examined the contribution of writers who mark the phases and stages in a teacher's work life either in terms of experience or in terms of levels of expertise. It has considered also the literature which describes and analyses the practice-based contexts of teacher learning. In doing so, this chapter has addressed the literature pertaining to the activities of engaging in the practice of teaching, professional socialisation and professional identity construction. It has examined also the research into these activities in terms of their contribution to differentiated learning outcomes for teachers placed in different teaching contexts. This chapter has also critiqued some of the ways in which researchers construe the process of teacher learning in terms of either psychological or social learning. This study, working as it does with teachers in the early career stage, seeks to broaden the literature on developing expertise to consider the impetus provided by the professional practice context for the development of competency in teaching.

In chapter 3, the methodology of the research project will be discussed. In this chapter, the research approach, research design and the methodology of data collection and analysis will be presented.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the way in which data were gathered, organised and analysed in order to address the research aim: to explore the effect of differentiated employment context on the development of beginning teachers' knowledge of teaching. This chapter begins with an overview of the research approach and an analysis of the study as one residing in the qualitative research paradigm. In the context of an overall qualitative approach, the related issues of researcher identity and reflexivity and the reliability, validity and generalisability of results (Gibbs, 2007, p. 91) are discussed. This first section of the chapter is followed by a discussion of the overall design features of the study as a descriptive study of a contemporary phenomenon (beginning teaching) within a particular geographic context in New South Wales (NSW), Australia, using mixed methods of data gathering. Ethical considerations are addressed and the selection and characteristics of the sample of participants and respondents are described. The research design is then amplified by further discussion of the data gathering, data organisation and data analysis methods used. The results of the data analysis processes are presented at length in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

### *Research Approach*

This study was designed as a descriptive qualitative study to elicit perceptions of the process of beginning teaching from those engaged in it. Deep understanding of the phenomenon to be studied was therefore to be found, not in objective descriptions of the lives of teachers by others, but rather in an exploration of teachers' own subjective perceptions of the experiences that constituted the professional aspect of their lives. The project was intended to explore and refine the meanings which participant beginning teachers ascribed to their experience of beginning teaching within a contemporary Australian context (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Gibbs, 2007). The qualitative research approach adopted in this study was intended to facilitate a "study of direct experience taken at face value" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 29) and was selected as a way of dealing with a complex real world problem in

such a way as to ensure that early career teachers could convey their own experiences in ways that reflected their own subjectivities and sensitivities to both the phenomenon of beginning teaching and to a lesser extent, to the research process itself.

The qualitative approach to the study, and the design which arose from this approach, were primarily intended to develop enhanced knowledge and understanding of beginning teaching in a contemporary Australian context; the intention was not to establish causality but rather to add to knowledge of the contemporary experience of beginning teaching in Australia through the exploration of rich description provided by appropriate participants in the process.

### *Qualitative Research: The Role of the Researcher*

Yin describes the process of data collection, and the role of the interviewer within the process, as “continuous interaction between the theoretical issues being studied and the data being collected”, and in this study the primary interaction was seen as between the researcher-as-person and the participant-as-person: in this case, the interaction was seen as a relationship rather than as an abstraction of thinking, and one in which “the qualitative case researcher [tried] to preserve *the multiple realities*, the different and even contradictory views of what is happening” (Stake, 1995, p. 12, emphasis in original).

### *Researcher Identity*

This project was envisaged as a process of knowledge generation using a constructivist research paradigm (Hatch, 2002, p. 15) with a view to exploring the meaning which participants gave to their own experiences as beginning teachers. In such a research context, the role of researcher was seen to be active co-construction with participants of new knowledge of the social world of the classroom, a world where “meaning is emergent from the material and organic strata rather than a product of them” (Tedlock, 2000, p. 471). Arising from this epistemological tradition was a view of the researcher as intimately connected to the process of data generation and interpretation and therefore as responsible for the creation or

generation of knowledge. It was accepted also by both researcher and participants that the researcher-as-person was a critical instrument in the process of data gathering and analysis (Cropley, 2002, p. 52; Mason, 2002, p. 53).

In conducting this research, the position of the researcher as a principal within the public education system was acknowledged as was ~~the~~ importance of recognising the person within the researcher” (Cotterill & Letherby, 1994, p. 116). The potential issues which may have been of concern to participants, especially as they were reliant on their own principals for satisfactory accreditation reports throughout the time of the research, were raised early in the research and addressed. These included separation of the research from the professional responsibilities of the researcher and an ongoing commitment to confidentiality between researcher and participants. As the project proceeded, data confirmed that the researcher’s personal position within the profession was accepted by participants as contributing to an understanding of the issues and concerns which were revealed by participants in the course of data gathering.

#### *Researcher and participant subjectivity*

Considerations of the validity and reliability of the evidence produced to support research findings in qualitative research have often been founded on ideas about the objectivity or subjectivity of the data used as evidence, and the degree to which the participants’ and the researcher’s values can be separated from the processes and products of research. ~~We~~ all have been socialized to believe that persons, processes, and products bearing the stamp of ‘objective’ deserve acclaim and acceptance, while persons, processes and products stamped ‘subjective’ do not” (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 15). Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 35) suggest that objectivity is:

... the ability to achieve a certain degree of distance from the research materials and to represent them fairly; the ability to listen to the words of respondents and to give them a voice independent of that of the researcher.

Such a definition, with its emphasis on constructs such as independence and fairness and ~~a~~ certain degree of” distance, implies the substantial influence of self-awareness of researcher identity on the part of the researcher in ensuring that data generation is

“objective” within this definition, even where the researcher’s epistemology permits a view of knowledge that allows that data are, and are intended to be, acceptably subjective.

Within the constructivist view of knowledge generation on which this project depended, subjectivity was accepted as contributing to the validity of the data gathered and to the results obtained from analysis. In engaging in qualitative research methodology, the researcher and participants accepted that such research “enjoins taking with great seriousness the words and actions of the people studied” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 6). In this study it was considered appropriate, in the quest for as faithful a representation as possible of the experiences of participants, to accept that it was neither possible nor even desirable to extinguish respondent or researcher subjectivity: it was perceived as an inescapable part of both data gathering and data analysis and therefore of the interpretation on which the results of the research were built.

#### *Researcher reflexivity and reflection*

Awareness of researcher identity by the researcher and acceptance of researcher subjectivity is embodied in consideration of the construct of reflexivity (Creswell, 2008, p. 485; Gibbs, 2007, pp. 91-93). Reflexivity in its simplest form is the awareness that a researcher acts upon, and is acted upon by, the social world as they participate in it, “the recognition that the product of research inevitably reflects some of the background milieu and predilections of the researcher” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 91). In this research, acceptance of a need to acknowledge reflexivity was combined with reflection or self-awareness in an attempt to understand phenomena holistically. This removed any claim to objectivity by the researcher in interpreting the experience of participants. In practice, it allowed for critical consideration of the positions of the researcher and the researched in relation to differences in gender, age, professional experience and positional power and the implications of these for the validity of the research process and its findings. “In the context of social research, reflexivity at its most immediately obvious level refers to the way in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research” (Davies, cited in Pillow, 2003, p. 178).

In this study the place of researcher identity was critical from the outset in the selection of the research problem, arising as it did out of the confluence of areas of interest or concern that lay within the researcher's own professional history. Self-awareness and the need to take account of reflexivity as a research tool demanded that these areas be brought into focus and considered throughout the research study. It was understood that the researcher had many selves with different voices many of which were brought into the research process requiring careful consideration in order to distinguish between the voices of the researcher—once a beginning teacher, recently a school principal, an employer of casual teachers, a mentor of beginning teachers and a teacher educator—and those of the participants.

### *Research Design*

#### *A Descriptive Study*

The design of this project was primarily intended to allow for the collection and analysis of descriptive data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, pp. 58-59) which would assist in identifying and addressing the issues arising in connection with a complex, real-world topic: the experience of beginning teaching. The ensuing research design was intended to give voice to beginning teachers themselves and weight to their perceptions of themselves, reported through their own stories of their experience, and acknowledging the influence and interconnectedness of time and person, culture and context in their perceptions of a world within a school and classroom that is a "complex - possibly multi-layered and textured - social world" (Mason, 2002, p. 3). This project was therefore designed primarily as a descriptive study based on qualitative methods of data collection. However, the design process also acknowledged that "qualitative research is characteristically exploratory, fluid and flexible, data-driven and context-sensitive" (Mason, 2002, p. 24) and design decisions were made throughout the research process in response to the participants' changing perceptions of their own changing experience.

*Exploratory mixed methods design and data collection*

The project was initially designed as a longitudinal collective case study (Creswell, 2008; Stake, 1995) of a small group of beginning teachers from a limited geographical area, based in qualitative data collection methods of interview, classroom observation, and document analysis. As the project proceeded it became evident that the views of a broader sample of teachers would assist in refining and extending the results of the qualitative inquiry and the inclusion of a postal survey-questionnaire enabled the collection of quantitative data from a larger sample of teachers located in a broader range of geographic and educational contexts. This process of engaging in both qualitative and quantitative data collection has been termed an “exploratory mixed methods design” by Creswell (2008, p. 561) and reflects the development of a research design which best represents the dynamic nature of the research problem over the two years of the data collection process.

*Exploratory mixed methods design and data analysis*

The design in turn allowed for enhanced comparative analysis of results not only within each data set, but between data sets as qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis proceeded concurrently and iteratively rather than sequentially. The process of data analysis was as iterative as the process of data collection and the process of extracting findings from the results was one of constant refinement of findings as emerging data were in turn analysed and reflected upon prior findings.

*Exploratory mixed methods design and triangulation*

The intertwining of the results of qualitative data collection and analysis with quantitative data collection and analysis (see Table 3.9) enabled the emergence of a study which was multi-phased, multi-person, multi-site and multi-method in data collection and data analysis. This aspect of the research design allowed for building understanding as qualitative data analysis was reflected in survey construction and analysis, and survey results were in turn reflected in subsequent interviews. Coding

of interview data revealed substantial overlap with survey data as the data organisation, analysis and results from both methods were integrated.

The use of mixed methods of data collection and analysis gave rise also to the possibility of triangulation of findings and of some generalisability of findings beyond the initially small and contextually limited original sample of case study participants (Creswell, 2008, pp. 561-563).

#### *Data Gathering Methods: Case Study*

The primary method of data gathering chosen was that of the case study in order to capture the experiences and understandings of a number of participants as their initially similar circumstances diverged in the course of the first two years of teaching. According to Stake (1995) a case study is defined as a study with recognisable boundaries; the “case” must have an intrinsic boundary that defines what the case is, and what it is not. It must also comprise features that locate the case within a specific and natural (and usually contemporary) context, as well as those that distinguish the case from phenomena that lie outside the boundaries of the case. Stake (1995, 2000) further delineated a case study as collective case study when multiple cases were described and compared (2000, p. 437) for the purpose of exploring a general phenomenon. Yin (1994) defines a case study as a comprehensive research strategy: “*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident*” (p. 13, emphasis in original). It is in this embedding of contemporary phenomena pertaining to multiple cases in a real-life context that suggested the usefulness of using collective case study as a method appropriate to the investigation of the phenomenon of beginning teaching and the influence of school and system contexts on this experience.

In this study, the meaning of the term “case study” was taken at its simplest: a case study comprised research which was conducted through drawing on experiences which occurred over a bounded period of time in the life-histories of particular



beginning teachers, in whose similarities and differences of recent experience in real life contexts lay the indicators that constituted the boundaries of each case.

### *Collective case study*

A collective case study rather than a single case study was selected in order to capture the anticipated difference in experience of beginning teachers as they applied knowledge gained from similar teacher education experiences to a diversity of employment circumstances or contexts, and in the expectation that it could provide ~~–~~“better understanding, perhaps better theorizing, about a ...larger collection of cases” (Stake, 2000, p. 437) at some sacrifice of deeper understanding of each individual case. The choice of a collective case study, grounded in qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis acknowledged that ~~–~~“the function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it” (Stake, 1995, p. 43).

A collective case study also provided a satisfactory methodology within which changes to the original project design (Hatch, 2002, p. 9) could be accommodated. In this study in order to move to a situation where the developing perspectives of the participants over a period of two years, rather than the initial understandings of the researcher, would guide the continuing generation and collection of data, it was intended that the design of the study be open to amendment if necessary. The process of constant comparison both within and between cases as successive interviews were conducted enabled the researcher to accommodate refinement of the data gained from participant interviews as their understanding of their own development as beginning teachers emerged and as their confidence in the research process and their place in the research study developed.

### *Data Gathering Methods: Survey-Questionnaire*

The survey-questionnaire was devised as a secondary means of data collection and analysis, a means of comparing the emerging findings of the initial interviews with the broader perspective of a larger number of participants in a greater variety of educational settings and employment contexts. Both quantitative and qualitative data

were collected from the survey, and analysis of the data involved both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The results of both types of data analysis procedures were in turn reflected in later interviews and served to identify additional areas for discussion which could be broached with interview participants.

### *Ethics*

Ethical considerations were applied to the data collection processes within both the case study and the survey-questionnaire.

### *Case Study*

The design of the case study involved identifying a number of graduating teacher education students who anticipated joining the teaching profession in the following year. This was initiated through contact with a local regional university whose students had completed professional experience at the researcher's school and with which the researcher had worked professionally over a number of years.

Before approaching the regional university, approval to conduct research was obtained from the Northern Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No. H6728). This was followed by written application to the university (see Appendix A: Letter of Application to University) and the receipt of email confirmation of approval from the Head of the School of Education at the university. Following an interview with the Head of School, an approach was made to a suggested lecturer of final year students and permission gained to approach students in the course of a lecture with an invitation to take part in the research study (see Appendix A2: Presentation to Final Year University Students). Seven students volunteered to be part of the study. Participants at this stage were therefore self-selected volunteers, neither known personally to the researcher nor personally chosen (see Appendix C for the Information and Statement of Informed Consent later issued to participants).

Meanwhile, an application to the New South Wales Department of Education and Training was made to conduct research, including classroom visits, and this too was approved (SERAP 02.160). As students became teachers in a variety of jurisdictions,

further applications were made during 2003 for permission to conduct research in areas where teachers were working. Approval to conduct research was received from two Catholic Schools Offices and from the appropriate government education department within another state.

In the preparation of these applications, the primary consideration was the maintenance of the privacy and anonymity of participants and of schools, the right of participants (including school principals) to withdraw from the study at any time; and the decision of the approving body to approve or reject the application to photograph students and teacher in the classroom in the course of classroom observation. When one jurisdiction refused permission to photograph, a further application elicited permission to observe in the classroom and to make field notes.

#### *Survey-Questionnaire*

The survey-questionnaire was formulated six months after interviews commenced. The content of the survey-questionnaire was determined to some extent by the researcher's own experience moderated by the emerging themes arising from the interviews conducted during the first six months of the data gathering period. A decision was made on the grounds of available resources to restrict the distribution of the survey to NSW Department of Education and Training schools. The difficulty of identification of beginning teachers and the time taken to make multiple contacts with a range of departmental officers meant that the survey process was restricted to teachers who were teaching in public schools, that is, in the 1799 schools under the jurisdiction of the NSW Department of Education and Training. Making contact with beginning teachers in other jurisdictions was outside the time frame of the study and beyond the resources of the researcher.

This required a further application to the NSW Department of Education and Training in order to seek approval for both the survey-questionnaire itself and, more particularly, the process of distribution. This further approval was received during the fourth term of the school year and surveys were distributed during this period (October – November, 2003).

*Sample: Case Study Participants and Survey Respondents*

In examining the characteristics of case study participants and survey-questionnaire respondents, a typology was drawn up based on the categories of data collected from the survey-questionnaire. The samples in both the case study and the survey were therefore described in terms of their personal attributes and their professional circumstances as described in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 *Personal Attributes and Professional Circumstances*

Factor	Description
Personal attributes	
Age	Under or over 25 years of age
Gender	Male or female
Workforce participation	Career change entrant to teacher education or school leaver
Teaching qualifications	Graduate or post-graduate qualifications
Professional circumstances	
Location	Rural or metropolitan location of school
Employment status	Permanent or casual teacher
Number of schools	Number of schools in which a teacher had taught
Class-based experience	The extent to which a teacher had responsibility for teaching a class of his/her own for a substantial period of time (i.e., more than one term)

*Sample: Case Study Participants*

This research study was characterised by some flexibility in design in terms of participant selection for the case study. Participants in the case study comprised a group of eight teacher education students who exited university in 2002 to begin work as primary school teachers in late 2002 to mid-2003. This study began with a selection of participants in such a way as to allow those with direct knowledge of the phenomenon of beginning teaching to contribute to expansion of knowledge about it (Cropley, 2002) and additional factors such as accessibility, time-frames, personal

resources and ethical considerations all necessitated a selection of cases bounded by geography, time and institutional access. Participants in this collective case study were therefore chosen through “purposeful sampling” (Burns, 2000, p. 465; Creswell, 2008, p. 214), and formed a non-probability or opportunity sample (Burns, 2000, pp. 92-93).

Although case study participants had (except for Helen) studied in the same regional area, there was some variation in the personal circumstances of these volunteers. They were not a homogeneous group and their personal attributes were reflected in the choices they made both at career entry and as their first years of teaching progressed.

*Personal attributes of case study participants*

Case study participants were not a homogeneous group and evidenced a range of personal attributes (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 *Personal Attributes of Case Study Participants*

Personal attribute	Number	Names
Age		
25 years and under	4	Cate, Dianne, Evan, Helen
Over 25	4	Alison, Bianca, Fiona, Graham
Gender		
Male	2	Evan, Graham
Female	6	Alison, Bianca., Cate, Dianne, Fiona, Helen
Work experience		
Prior work experience	3	Alison, Fiona, Graham
School leavers	5	Bianca, Cate, Dianne, Evan, Helen
Qualifications		
Graduate	8	All participants
Post-graduate	0	

*Pre-service experience of case study participants*

All but one of the participants in the case study had begun their teaching from very similar experiences of teacher education within the same regional institution and their personal attributes and professional circumstances to some extent mirrored that of survey respondents (see Table 3.3). The one teacher with contrasting experience was Helen, who was teaching in a metropolitan suburban school and had experienced a different teacher education institution in a capital city; her experiences as both student and teacher served to highlight areas which were common to or different from the experiences of teachers across the rural-metropolitan divide. Three case study participants (Alison, Fiona and Graham) were mature age entrants with at least five years work experience in unrelated careers behind them and the remaining five were school leavers. There were some slight variations in the structure of the courses undertaken but on the whole the knowledge base gained in all courses had been similar in content. The case study therefore undertook an examination of the experiences of these teachers as they moved into the workforce: the differentiation in knowledge gained in the early years of teaching could therefore be more readily attributed to the difference in early teaching experience than to differences in preparation (see Table 3.3).

*Professional circumstances of case study participants*

At the beginning of the first year of teaching, two participants, Alison and Helen, had received permanent appointments. In Alison's case this was to a school in a neighbouring state, requiring her to adjust to different school and system organisation and different curriculum and pedagogical requirements. One participant, Evan, had begun work in a year-long temporary position and two (Fiona and Graham) were employed in shorter-term temporary positions. The remaining two participants (Bianca and Dianne) were in casual positions. Cate was appointed to a permanent position, commencing in the second term of the year having worked as a casual teacher during her final year of teacher education and as a temporary teacher during her first term since completion of her studies. Evan received a permanent appointment to the same school beginning the following year.

Table 3.3 *Pre-service and Teaching Experience of Case Study Participants*

Participant	University	Pre-service course completed	Employment status and location	Duration of position	Class-based experience	Number of schools
Alison	Regional	End 2002	Permanent (interstate metropolitan)	Indefinite	Own class	One
Bianca	Regional	End 2002	Casual (regional city)	Daily assignments	None	Several
Cate	Regional	End 2002	Casual followed by permanent appointment (rural)	One term / indefinite	Two classes	Two since graduation (some casual experience in a 3rd school prior to completing the course)
Dianne	Regional	End 2002	Casual (regional city)	Daily, then a one-term block as relief teacher	None	Several
Evan	Regional	End 2002	Temporary (regional Catholic)	One year, extended in second year by appointment as permanent teacher	Own class	One (some casual experience in several schools prior to completing the course)
Fiona	Regional	Mid 2003	Temporary (rural)	Two terms in one school, followed by one year in a second school	Own class (2)	Two
Graham	Regional	Mid 2003	Temporary (rural and regional)	Two terms in each of two schools	Own classes / students	Two
Helen	Metropolitan	End 2002	Permanent (metropolitan)	Indefinite	Own class	One

*Changes in the composition of the case study cohort*

In this study the composition of the participant group (see Table 3.3) changed in the course of the project with the addition of two teachers (Fiona and Helen) from personal contact with the researcher rather than from the original university-based self-selection process. Helen provided a metropolitan perspective of both teacher education and beginning teaching, in contrast to that of the initial participants who were educated in a rural university and who mostly took up teaching appointments in rural or regional schools. Helen's participation was, however, limited to an initial interview at the end of 2003, and distance (a day's driving time from the researcher's location) precluded her inclusion in the second and third interviews or classroom observation.

The cohort also changed as a result of movement of teachers out of the study. The loss of one participant (Imogen) to other employment between the end of university and the start of the teaching year, and the movement of two participants (Dianne and Graham) overseas at the end of their first year of teaching left a case study participant cohort slightly different at the end of the study from those who had initially volunteered to be a part of it. Table 3.3 shows the case study participants who participated in the study during their first year of teaching, identified by pseudonyms, the location of their university pre-service education and their subsequent employment location and status. Each teacher's induction into the profession of teaching over two years constituted a "case" in its own right and yet the similarities and contrasts in experience were such as to allow for comparisons and contrasts to be elicited from the stories and "collected" into a collective case study of the contemporary experience of beginning primary teaching.

*Sample: Survey-Questionnaire Respondents*

The NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) at the time of the project was the government department responsible for both school and further (technical) education in the state of NSW. Schools were organised into 40 districts, each comprising approximately 50 schools and led by a District Superintendent located in a District Office which housed also a number of school support staff. There were



2237 schools under the jurisdiction of the NSW DET at the start of the project. Of these, 1649 primary schools, 65 central schools and 97 special schools enrolled primary students from Kindergarten to Year 6 (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2002a).

Survey respondents were drawn from each of the districts of the NSW Department of Education and Training. The survey-questionnaire, sent to 399 beginning teachers through system leadership levels (see Figure 2) involving senior DET personnel and school principals, was returned by 241 teachers at the end of the first year, a response rate of 60 per cent. At this time (that is, by the end of the first year as professional teachers), 61 per cent of respondents were in non-permanent teaching positions.

#### *Location of survey respondents*

Principals in 1799 Department of Education and Training (DET) schools were approached to ascertain the number and location of schools in which beginning teachers were working (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 *Number of Respondent Schools with Primary Students in NSW*

All schools with primary student cohorts		Schools that responded to –Principal’s fax”	Response rate (per cent)
Rural/regional	983	594	60
Metropolitan	816	434	55
Total	1799	1028	57

Of the 1028 schools who responded to the initial approach to the principal, 254 principals identified beginning teachers on their staff. A majority of those schools in which beginning teachers were located were in metropolitan areas even though a majority of schools were actually located in rural/regional areas. One-third of school principals did not reply. In some districts, particularly those on the coast of NSW, very few schools with beginning teachers were identified whereas in some western Sydney schools, principals identified up to six beginning teachers on their staff (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 *Distribution of NSW Schools with Identified Beginning Teachers*

Geographic Area	Respondent schools with beginning teachers	Respondent schools without beginning teachers	Total of respondent schools
Rural/Regional	111 (44%)	483 (62%)	594 (58%)
Metropolitan	143 (56%)	291 (38%)	434 (42%)
Total	254 (100%)	773 (100%)	1028 (100%)

Following the receipt of replies from school principals the survey-questionnaire was sent to 399 teachers in 254 schools and a return rate of 60 per cent was obtained; that is, surveys were returned from 241 teachers from schools in each of the forty districts which in NSW comprised the organisational structure of the NSW Department of Education and Training (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 *Number of Beginning Teachers who Responded to the Survey*

Geographic area	Teacher surveys sent	Teacher surveys returned	Response rate (per cent)
Rural/regional	158	91	58
Metropolitan	241	150	62
Total	399	241	60

#### *Personal attributes of survey respondents*

Table 3.7 shows the personal attributes of beginning teachers who responded to the survey. Beginning teachers were located across NSW, with 62 per cent of respondents in schools in the 18 metropolitan districts of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong and the remainder in the 22 rural and regional districts. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents had completed their Higher School Certificate immediately prior to their pre-service education; one-third of respondents were over 25 years of age; and over a quarter of all respondents had come to teaching from other careers. Thirteen percent of the total number of respondents were male, an under-representation of male primary teachers when compared to 21 per cent (of permanent

teachers) across Australia (Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs, 2003, p. 18). Only four per cent of respondents had postgraduate qualifications beyond the level required for accreditation as a teacher.

Table 3.7 *Personal Attributes of Survey Respondents (N=241)*

Personal attribute	n	%
Age		
25 years and under	162	67
Over 25	79	33
Gender		
Male	31	13
Female	210	87
Work experience		
Prior work experience	133	45
No prior work experience	108	55
Qualifications		
Initial teaching	231	96
Post-graduate	10	4

#### *Professional circumstances of survey respondents*

By the end of the first year, the professional experience of these respondents differed substantially from the professional experience traditionally regarded as typical for a beginning teacher in NSW. Of the 241 respondents, 39 per cent (94 teachers) were in permanent employment by the end of the first year with 61 per cent still working as casual or temporary teachers. Of the 94 teachers in permanent employment, 82 had received their positions through the Graduate Recruit program. There was a slight overrepresentation of graduate recruits in the survey group compared to those employed under this program (both primary and secondary) across the state (34 per cent of survey respondents versus 24 per cent of permanent employees across NSW).

By the end of the first year, only 58 per cent of respondents had taught in one school only. This group of 139 teachers included 64 permanent teachers who had received appointments in the course of, rather than at the beginning of, their first year and 75 casual or temporary teachers for whom there was little likelihood of continuity in the second year. Forty-two per cent of respondents worked in more than one school, and in some cases, in more than one system, for the duration of their first year. Sixty-one per cent had had mostly class-based experience during the first year (that is, of one term or more) while almost 40 per cent still had limited or no class-based experience within which to develop their teaching skills by the end of the first year of teaching (see Table 3.8).

Table 3.8 *Professional Circumstances of Survey Respondents (N=241)*

Professional circumstance	n	%
Location		
Rural	91	38
Metropolitan	150	62
Employment status		
Permanent	94	39
Casual	147	61
Number of schools		
One school only	139	58
More than one school	102	42
Class-based experience		
Mostly class-based	146	60
Limited or no class-based	95	40

Almost 40 per cent of the survey respondents had experienced several schools in the course of their first year of teaching and for a small number this had included a mix of different schools in different education systems, usually within both the public and the Catholic schools' systems. Despite the long-term career uncertainties, there was opportunity for many who were engaged in casual employment to have some ongoing class-based experience of more than a term's duration in the course of their

first year. Of the 147 non-permanent teachers, 52 (22 per cent of respondents or 35 per cent of casual/temporary teachers) had had some class-based experience by the end of the first year. However, this class-based experience was often undertaken in different schools. There remained a small group of teachers who, as day-to-day casual relief teachers, had very limited ongoing class-based experience in the course of the first year and whose experience of teaching had proved the most fragmented.

### *Project Timetable*

The research design involved the collection of data through two methods: the collective case study and the postal survey-questionnaire (Creswell, 2008; Stake, 1995). Through these methods complementary sets of data were collected utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Concurrent data collection and data analysis was a feature of the project both within the two methods chosen and between them (see Table 3.9).

The process followed in this study was an iterative rather than a linear one (Hatch, 2002, p. 52) with the three activities of data gathering, data organisation and data analysis for each of the two methods—case study and survey—proceeding at times independently and at times concurrently. Data gathering with case study participants was carried out primarily through a series of semi-structured interviews while the survey-questionnaire sought respondents' attitudes to a number of issues related to beginning teaching through completion of items using Likert scales.

Figure 1 shows the timeframe for initial data collection, data organisation and data analysis. Data collection began with the process of gaining Ethics approval and access to case study participants concurrently with the development of the interview schedules (see Appendix C). Semi-structured interviews constituted the primary sources of case study data over the succeeding two years. Six months into the data collection process, a similar process of obtaining Ethics approval and developing and piloting the survey-questionnaire occurred followed by the sending and receiving of the postal survey-questionnaire over a period of five months. In turn, the collection of data from the survey-questionnaire was followed by the last of the interviews.

Table 3.9 Chronological Process of Research Activities

Date	Data gathering	Data organisation	Data analysis
Nov 2002	Case study participants selected; interview schedule devised		
March – Aug 2003	Interview 1 & 2 conducted	Interviews 1 & 2 transcribed	Interviews 1 & 2 coded using NVivo 1.3 & tentative constructs
July-Sept 2003	Survey prepared		Ongoing recoding of case study data
Nov 2003	Survey distributed	Survey results collated	Survey data analysed using SPSS 14.0 and Excel; ongoing recoding of case study data
July – Oct 2004	Interview 3 conducted	Interview 3 transcribed	Interview 3 coded; Interviews 1 & 2 re-coded Ongoing analysis of quantitative and qualitative survey data
2005-2009			Comparison of survey and case study data

### *Concurrent Processes of Data Collection and Organisation*

Both processes of data collection proceeded concurrently with the organisation of numerical and non-numerical data from both methods. This was achieved by importation into computer-based analysis programs. Non-numerical data from the case study were imported into NUD\*IST 4 and later NVivo 1.3 (QSR International, 2000); numerical data from the survey-questionnaire were entered into SPSS 14.0 and later SPSS 16.0 (SPSS Inc., 2007) and non-numerical data from the survey-questionnaire were collated and organised using Excel (Microsoft Office, 2007).

Organisation of data sets was followed by the completion of preliminary descriptive statistical analysis of numerical data, and ongoing coding, re-coding and thematic analysis of non-numerical data. Again, these two data analysis processes were

iterative and interactive in their implementation both with each other and with the ongoing activities of data collection and subsequent data organisation.

The complexity of interaction within and between the two major processes of data gathering – the qualitative and the quantitative – reflected a method of constant comparison of data, results and findings from which emerged an understanding of the research topic explored from many interrelated perspectives.

Research activity	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Development of research design	→							
Development of interview schedules	→							
Gaining access and permission for interviews	→	→	→					
Selection of case study participants	→							
Initial focus group interviews	→							
Individual interviews 1, 2, 3		→	→					
Transcription of interviews and return for comment		→	→	→				
Coding and analysis of interview data		→	→	→	→	→		
Development and trial of survey-questionnaire		→						
Distribution and return of survey-questionnaire		→						
Survey data entry into SPSS and Excel			→	→				
Statistical analysis of survey data			→	→	→	→		
Continuing organisation, analysis and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data from interviews and questionnaires; writing up of research report		→	→	→	→	→	→	→

Figure 1. Timetable of Research Activity

### *Data Gathering Process: Case Study*

#### *Participant Narrative as Primary Data Source*

This study made extensive use of participant narratives through semi-structured interviewing as the major data gathering method used in the collective case study. In accepting participant narrative as the primary data source, this study accepted firstly, that the meaning people made of their experience of beginning teaching affected the way they carried out that experience, and secondly, that interviewing allowed the researcher to put behaviour in context and to gain access to in-depth understanding of participants' action (Seidman, 1991, p. 4). Interviews were therefore constructed with an acceptance of participants' capability in "narrative competence" and an acceptance as well of the view "that all people are competent to describe their own lives and say how they understand them" (Cropley, 2002, p. 63).

#### *Semi-structured Interview as Primary Data Collection Method*

In this case study, participants' narratives, encapsulating attitudes, emotions and descriptions of behaviour, were captured through the medium of semi-structured interviews (Mason, 2002; Seidman, 1991). Data were collected in context, and the impact of the work context and setting on the content of teachers' reflection on and recount and explanation of their experiences as beginning teachers was fully acknowledged. Collection of participants' narratives through semi-structured interviews was therefore carried out as far as possible within the natural setting of the participant's university, home, and recreation location and, when appropriate, within the participants' schools and classrooms in order to place narratives within a context which was relevant to participants' teaching experience and thus facilitate trustworthy interpretation of data.

The reflections of participants in this research project were collected during interviews using a range of techniques designed to allow participants a multi-modal means of expression which engaged participants' verbal, written and visual skills. Direct narrative recount through in-depth focus group and individual interview was supported by complementary data collection methods, all of which revealed aspects



of the participants' personal experience of beginning teaching. These methods included participant observation by the researcher (Mason, 2002), documentary and artefact analysis by both participant and researcher, and autobiographical writing (Bullough et al., 1992; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) through participant construction of graphic organisers (concept maps and Plus-Minus Interesting charts) as prompts for participant reflection. In addition, the use of digital photography as a technique for stimulated recall (Reitano, 2005) provided significant impetus to promote reflection on and recount and explanation of participants' understanding of their development as practising teachers. Participants' accounts expressed through each of these response modes were understood to reflect the meanings which participants ascribed to their experience, and this ascribed meaning, (Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995) constituted the content of the research data.

The intention in selecting interviewing as a primary method of data collection was to recognise also that "the preconceptions, perceptions and beliefs of social actors in educational settings form an inescapably important part of the backdrop of social interaction" (Scott & Usher, 1999, p. 109) in addition to their day-to-day experience. In examining the changing professional knowledge base of beginning teachers, a base developed through a personal interpretive process of critical reflection on personal action, it was imperative to gain a detailed understanding over time of the thoughts and feelings, perceptions and beliefs of participants as they sought to make sense of their own changing experience as a beginning teacher and in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted at key points in participants' work lives were considered to be the vehicle best fitted to such a task.

### *The Sequence of Case Study Interviews*

Data were collected over three successive phases in the course of the longitudinal study. These were designated as Phase 1 (the first semester or two terms of teaching; Phase 2 (the second semester of teaching, that is, after six months of teaching), and Phase 3 (the second year of teaching). Data were derived from conversation based on a semi-structured interview schedule which related to the research problem being addressed, initially in a focus group interview involving three participants (Morgan,

1988) (see Appendix C1), and then in three successive individual interviews with each participant (see Appendix C2).

### *Focus Group Interview*

A focus group interview held at the end of the final year of initial teacher education was used to capture the initial response of the participants to the project (Creswell, 2008; de Negri & Thomas, 2003; Hatch, 2002; Morgan, 1988). The purpose of this focus group discussion was to provide opportunity for participants to suggest through their responses to the researcher-devised interview schedule (see Appendix C1) other areas germane to the topic. Students engaged in discussion about the value of their pre-service course, teaching as a career, their expectations concerning career entry and their concerns about the availability of employment as a teacher in the following year. The focus group provided an opportunity for participants to develop confidence in and rapport with the researcher in a group setting. It also allowed exploration of the perceptions of the interviewees of their various situations and some reflection upon them in the course of the interview. In addition, the group setting facilitated the exchange of ideas between participants

### *Individual Interviews: Overview*

The focus group interview was followed by a series of three individual, semi-structured interviews per participant over the following two years. Table 3.10 shows the number, timing and sequence of interviews held with each of the individual case study participants and Table 3.11 summarises the activities of researcher and participants during these interviews.

Interview 1 was conducted 6-10 weeks after commencing teaching and the data collected in this interview represented participant knowledge at Phase 1 of the project. Interview 2 was held 6-10 months after beginning teaching and hence represented Phase 2; and Interview 3 occurred during Phase 3, 18 -20 months after beginning teaching (see Table 3.10). In Interviews 2 and 3, the question-response format was complemented by the additional data collection methods detailed above: participant classroom observation, stimulated recall from a photographic record of

classroom events, participant and researcher discussion of teacher and student documents and artefacts and completion of graphic organisers (concept maps and Plus-Minus-Interesting (PMI) charts) (see Appendix D). These methods were designed to facilitate a multi-method, longitudinal approach and to provide in addition, an intensive, in-depth understanding of participants' changing situations. This multi-method means of collecting data allowed for recount, reflection, exploration and explanation of experiences by participants. Throughout the data-gathering process over almost two years, the process was based in an iterative process of analysis. This ensured that each interview built on its predecessor both in the content elicited and in the processes employed by researcher and participant to understand the experiences of the participant.

Table 3.10 *Sequence of Interviews*

Interviewee	Pre-teaching	Early-Mid First Year	Late First year	Late Second Year
Alison	Focus Group interview (11/03)	Interview 1 (03/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (08/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 3 (08/04)
Bianca	Focus Group interview (11/03)	Interview 1 (03/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (09/03)	Interview (at home) (08/04)
Cate	Focus Group interview (11/03)	Interview 1 (03/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (09/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 3 (08/04)
Dianne		Interview 1 (03/03)	Individual Interview 2 (at home) (11/03)	Overseas (01/04)
Evan		Interview 1 (02/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (11/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 3 (08/04)
Fiona	(Mid-year finisher) Interview 1 (07/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (11/03)		Classroom observation and Interview 3 (11/04)
Graham	(Mid-year finisher) Interview 1 (07/03)	Classroom observation and Interview 2 (11/03)	Classroom observation and interview (06/04)	Overseas 07/04
Helen (Metropolitan )			Interview (at home) (11/03)	

*Initial individual interviews (Interview 1)*

The first individual interviews (designated as Interview 1) were held early in 2003 with each of the five participant teachers who had completed their studies and in a setting of the participants' choosing. An initial interview with Helen took place toward the end of 2003 following her completion of the survey; this interview covered much of the material of the focus group, initial individual interview and subsequent teaching interviews and took place during a weekend in her home rather than in her school because of the constraints of distance and travel time. Initial interviews were later held with Graham and Fiona once they had completed university (mid-2003); these interviews were similar in content to information gathered in the focus group interview.

Each of these interviews lasted from 1.5 to 2 hours, was semi-structured and involved both question and response format together with the construction of concept maps with associated verbal commentary which was audio-recorded (see Appendix C2: Schedule for Individual Interviews). Interviews revolved around some general questions allowing the teacher to recount and describe their perception of the events of the first six weeks to one term of teaching. In order to capture a non-verbal representation of teacher thinking at this early stage of teaching, each teacher completed a concept map with verbal annotation representing their thinking on "Teaching" at this stage of their career (see Appendix D: Concept Maps & PMI Charts, Initial Concept Maps).

*Overview of other methods of data collection*

In the second and third interviews conducted in participants' classrooms direct narrative recount was supported by other data collection methods which revealed further aspects of the participants' personal experience of beginning teaching. These (participant observation, documentary and artefact analysis, use of graphic organisers as stimuli for discussion and the use of digital photography as a technique used to promote stimulated recall) provided opportunity for participants' reflection on and discussion of pedagogical decision-making and explanation, as distinct from recount.

*Documentary analysis*

Documentary evidence was collected during the lesson, discussed and returned to the teacher (Hatch, 2002; Mason, 2002). This took the form of lesson plans and programs and work diaries of teachers as well as photographs of student work samples. Where copies of documents were taken for later consideration, they were de-identified to protect privacy and were not available for publication.

*Participant observation*

Participant observation (Hatch, 2002; Mason, 2002) of teachers and students in classrooms was conducted at each of the second and third interviews where teachers were in agreement and principals of schools agreed. Dianne, concerned about the unpredictability of her lessons, elected not to be observed. Classroom observation required consultation with the teacher and the parents of the children in the class to ensure that there was no parental opposition to the researcher's visit, to taking photographs or to talking with the children in the class. Observation notes recording the reflections of the researcher based on her experience as a principal and former teacher and mentor of teacher education and internship students provided further material for consideration in interpreting the data.

*Stimulated recall*

The inclusion of a stimulated recall process (Calderhead, 1981; Nilsson, 2008) as a classroom-based data gathering method enabled discussion of the choices made in the course of a day's teaching mid-way through each of the first and second years of teaching. Events arising during the day and documents available were recorded through the use of a digital camera (Reitano, 2005). This facilitated immediate review of events and of current student and teacher artefacts by viewing the photos on a laptop at the start of the interview. This process enabled teachers to focus on the "why" of the events and documents and teachers responded to the digital image with much detail about their students, their own thinking and their reflections on the antecedents and possible consequences for teaching and learning of each situation captured.

Table 3.11 *Researcher and Participant Activity during Individual Interviews*

Individual Interview	Researcher activity	Participant activity	Data focus
Interview 1 6-10 weeks (Location of choice)	Semi-structured interview	Recount of early experiences, prior to and during early weeks of teaching	Events & teacher activity
	Concept map	Initial reflection on concept of teaching	Model of ideal of teaching
Interview 2 8-9 months (Classroom observation & interview)	Semi-structured interview, including developing emergent themes of first interview	Recount of experiences since initial interview	Significant events & teacher & student activity
	Stimulated recall based on viewing of digital photographs and observation of documents	Explanation of classroom events	Early evidence of pedagogical reasoning based on evaluation of effectiveness of teaching
	Concept map	Developing reflection on concept of teaching and progress since previous interview	Emergence of model derived from personal practical experience
Interview 3 20 – 24 months (Classroom observation & interview)	Semi-structured interview, including developing emergent themes of first interview	Recount of experiences since second interview	Significant events contributing to teacher decisions re student activity
	Stimulated recall based on viewing of digital photographs and observation of documents	Explanation of classroom events	Evidence of developing pedagogical reasoning based in student learning
	Concept map	Developing reflection on concept of teaching and progress since previous interview	Conceptual model derived from personal experience & theoretical understanding
	PMI graphic organiser (Plus, Minus, Interesting)	Evaluation of teaching	Information about personal and professional satisfaction

This process was designed to produce data of immediacy not possible with interviews which of necessity focused on past events. It allowed discussion of simultaneous experience, albeit from the different viewpoints of the teacher and the researcher, of the events of the lesson, its emergent issues, problems and critical events, and sharing of perspective on these by researcher and participant.

The outcomes of the pre-and post lesson discussions and the digital image record of classroom events formed parts of the data which were incorporated into the body of categories and themes previously established. The constant comparative method of data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 72) was used to meld information gained from these sources with that obtained by group and individual interviews and documentary analysis.

#### *Use of graphic organisers*

Graphic organisers were used to provide a non-verbal “introduction” in the interviews. At each interview, participants were asked to draw a simple concept map which represented their thinking about “Teaching” (Morine-Dershimer, 1989). As the research study proceeded, these became a record of the changes in teachers’ thinking over the first two years. Participants provide verbal commentary which was audio-recorded during the drawing of the maps. During the second and third interviews, participants reviewed their earlier maps (which had remained with the researcher) and commented on the changes they could see and the circumstances they believed had contributed to the changes. During the third interview, participants reviewed their overall perceptions of their time in the profession using a PMI chart (see Appendix D: Case Study Participants’ Concept Maps and PMI Charts).

#### *Second individual interviews (Interview 2)*

The second contact between participants and researcher occurred at each teacher’s school, six to eight months into the teaching year. During the second semester of 2003, six participants (including the two mid-year finishers) were observed in their classrooms and interviews were conducted at school at the conclusion of each visit. One of those interviewed in early 2003 (Dianne) elected not to participate in a

classroom visit because of the instability of her work situation and, in this case, the second visit was held in her home. The participant from a Sydney metropolitan school (Helen) was interviewed only once, as a classroom visit would have required three days of the researcher's time when travel was taken into account and was not feasible given the researcher's work commitments.

With the permission of the relevant employing authority, the teacher, the school's principal and the parents of students in the teacher's class, the researcher observed in each teacher's classroom for a day and, where permitted by the school or employing authority, utilised all of the above additional data collection techniques (see Appendix D: Case Study Participants Concept Maps & PMI Charts, Second Concept Maps) to prompt not only recount, but exploratory reflection on emerging understandings of pedagogical reasoning and decision-making.

#### *Third individual interviews (Interview 3)*

In 2004, a second classroom observation and third interview was carried out in each of five participants' classrooms. Two of the participants (Fiona and Graham) as temporary teachers had changed schools within the first year of teaching and hence the second observation interview was carried out in a setting different from the first. For the remaining three participants, Cate, Alison and Evan, the second observation and interview was carried out at the beginning of the fourth semester of teaching in the same schools where the previous observations had been conducted. The remaining participant in the original cohort, Bianca, who had remained a casual day-to-day relief teacher, had had very little work during 2004 and elected to be interviewed at home at the end of her second year since leaving university. At this stage, Dianne had moved overseas.

This final interview followed a similar format in terms of a classroom observation by the researcher as participant-observer; the use of digital photographs as a stimulus for later discussion; consideration of documentation; and the use of graphic organisers to represent teacher thinking. In addition to the construction of a third concept map and its comparison with the first and second maps, teachers completed a "PMI" chart (Plus, Minus, Interesting) on their perception of their first year(s) of teaching (see



Appendix D: Case Study Participants' Concept Maps & PMI Charts, Third Concept Maps; PMI Charts).

*Data Gathering Process: Survey-Questionnaire*

In order to set the qualitative data of the case study within a broader geographic and experiential context, a postal survey-questionnaire was used as an additional source of data (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008; Salant & Dillman, 1994). The development of the survey took place at the same time as the preliminary coding and analysis of Interview 1 data, and its distribution after the conduct of Interview 2. Return of the survey, data organisation and preliminary data analysis occurred prior to Interview 3. The survey explored the experiences of 241 beginning teachers located in all 40 of the (then) educational districts of the NSW Department of Education and Training across NSW. This provided a complementary set of participants who had experienced a range of teacher education courses, were located in a variety of schools in very diverse geographical regions across NSW and who were teaching in a varied set of teaching roles and employment contexts. In order to explore the phenomenon of beginning teaching across this wider spectrum of teachers, quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis were employed to complement the qualitative methods of the case study (Creswell, 2008). This research design enabled both a broader appreciation of the research area under investigation and triangulation of findings as data collection and data analysis from both approaches proceeded iteratively throughout the project.

The distribution of the survey was restricted to schools within the NSW Department of Education and Training, with a primary (that is, Kindergarten to Year 6) student cohort. This decision allowed the researcher to capitalise on professional knowledge of the system, of its organisational structure, and of recognised communication channels between district offices of the department and schools. It enabled the researcher to approach principals and some district superintendents within the system as colleagues. With the approval and assistance of this one overarching authority, access was provided initially to 1799 schools. Accessing schools within other systems (for example, private schools or Catholic schools) required the approval of

several separate institutions such as individual schools or dioceses and within the timeframes of the study, this was not considered viable.

*Accessing survey respondents through system leaders*

Since lists of beginning teachers were not available from university or department sources, beginning teachers were approached through two leadership levels within the department (Creswell, 1998, pp. 219-220; Hatch, 2002, pp.45-46). These included system leaders (district superintendents) and school leaders (principals) (see Figure 2). Contact with schools was initially made through district superintendents. A request for the approval of each of the (then) 40 district superintendents to conduct research in his/her district was granted by each superintendent. This enabled the researcher to approach principals in schools, and a further request to district superintendents for assistance with the distribution of surveys through the facility of group faxing at district offices was agreed to (see Appendix H1: Letter to District Superintendents and District Office Staff; Appendix H2: Initial Letter to Principals of All Schools with Primary Students). This provided an efficient and officially-sanctioned means of contacting all schools with primary student cohorts within each district.

Principals were asked to return the fax (see Appendix H2) indicating the numbers of beginning teachers at each school to the researcher's school which was appropriately remunerated for the resources used. As each fax was returned, it was filed according to district, and confidential records were kept of the schools which indicated a NIL return (that is, no beginning teachers at the school); of the number of schools where no fax was returned; and of the number of beginning teachers indicated in the case of schools where such teachers were identified by the principal according to the criteria specified in the letter to principals. Surveys were prepared with numerical coding according to district to allow comparison between metropolitan and city schools, by school, and by number of teacher to allow comparisons of experience within one school where several respondents were available.

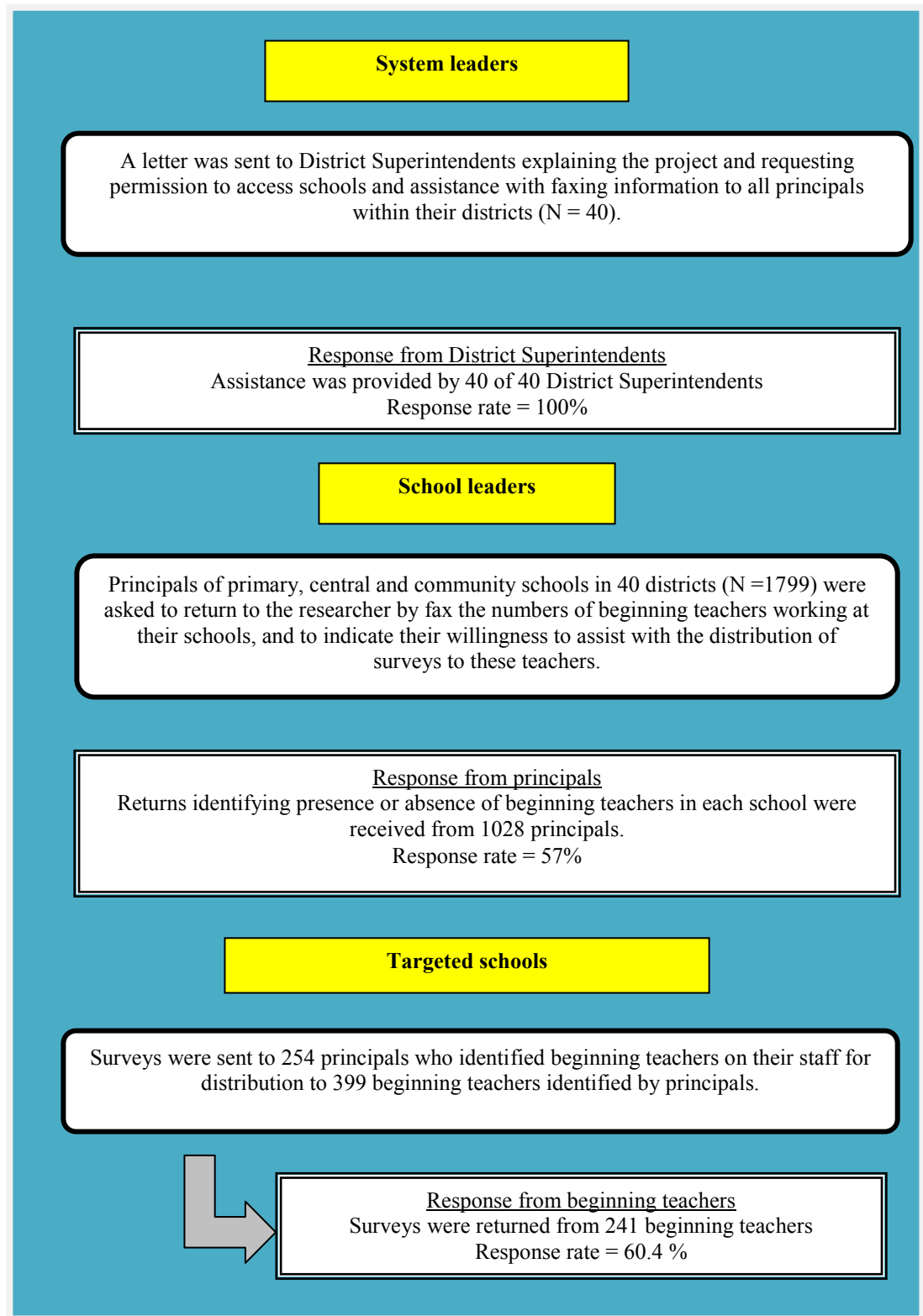


Figure 2. Accessing survey respondents through system leadership levels

Where the return fax indicated the presence on staff of beginning teachers, a letter was sent to the principal requesting distribution of the survey to the identified beginning teachers (see Appendix H3: Follow-up Letter to Principals of all Schools with Beginning Teachers on Staff). This letter included an information sheet and letter (see Appendix H4: Letter Accompanying Survey Sent to Identified Beginning Teachers) together with a copy of the survey (see Appendix I) for each of the number of beginning teachers identified by the principal in the return fax. No direct contact between researcher and respondents occurred and respondents were not personally identified.

Surveys were then returned by teachers in postage-paid addressed envelopes directly to the University of Tasmania, and forwarded to the researcher's home address. The intention in returning surveys directly to the University through a reply paid envelope was to enable teachers to take control of their decision to participate and to remove responsibility from the principal for any involvement beyond the distribution of the initial survey. As surveys were returned, they were collated and organised by district, school and teacher number and the identifying six digit codes became the ordering numbers for surveys returned.

There was no attempt to follow up those schools where teachers' surveys were not returned. This would have required a further contact with school principals, notification to the principal of non-completion by a beginning teacher at a critical time in the probationary assessment process and the possibility that teachers could feel coerced by their principal into completion rather than allowed to complete the survey both anonymously and voluntarily.

#### *The Survey-Questionnaire: Content*

The survey-questionnaire contained a total of 102 items, organised into 17 questions, including both forced- and open-response questions. Items comprised eight demographic questions; six sets of items which relied on Likert scales to reveal attitudes to teaching experience; and three open-ended items to which respondents were invited to reply in prose (see Appendix I). The content of this survey was based on an examination of the literature, the professional experience of the researcher, and

the responses of the interview participants to the focus group and initial individual interviews. The questionnaire was designed to operationalise the experiences and concerns identified from these sources through a number of questionnaire items which explored perceptions of teacher knowledge, support received, professional learning accessed, professional involvement in school culture, difficulties experienced and career perspectives. Questionnaire data were drawn from the self-reported experiences of teachers and the results of this survey-questionnaire were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Within the survey, opportunity for free response provided additional data which could be analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

### *Reliability and Validity*

The reliability of the data used in this study was dependent on several measures appropriate to the research method chosen. Internal consistency reliability within the data obtained from the survey-questionnaire was assessed by using Cronbach's alpha to test the reliability of the questionnaire item scales (Pallant, 2005, p. 90). However, reliability as an attribute of statistical deduction needed to give way in the case study to deep understanding of a phenomenon and, hence, reliability within the case study was maintained through faithful representation of data in accurate recording, verbatim transcription and in coding drawn from the data.

Validity within the qualitative phase of the study was derived from its internal coherence and practical usefulness (Cropley, 2002). Content validity of non-numerical data were therefore assessed by reference to the literature and the researcher's professional knowledge and extensive experience in interviewing beginning teachers prior to state-wide employment, in mentoring beginning teachers on school staffs, and in employing teachers in a variety of contexts. The case study also relied upon construct validity drawn from multiple sources of evidence (Burns, 2000, p. 476).

In addition, both reliability and validity were assessed using triangulation between the results of multiple data gathering methods within the case study and between the case study and the survey-questionnaire. The confluence of data gained from all

sources within and between the two sets of data collected provided opportunity for triangulation of findings within each data set as well as between data sets which in turn contributed to both the reliability and validity of the overall findings. Where the data obtained from both case study and questionnaire reflected multiple perspectives of similar experiences to which were ascribed similar meanings at comparable stages of the process of learning to teach, the internal validity of the research study was strengthened by triangulation of both method and results (Burns, 2000, p. 419).

### *Data Organisation*

#### *Case Study Data*

Twenty-two individual interviews were recorded on audio-tape with the permission of the interviewees. Tapes of Interviews 1 and 2 were transcribed in full (*verbatim*) by the researcher and tapes of Interview 3 were transcribed by a professional transcriber as a way of reducing the time taken for transcription. For an example of an interview transcript, see Appendix E: Transcript of Individual Interview. Transcripts were returned to participants for comment. Only one participant elected to make an additional comment and none required changes to their transcripts. Concept maps and graphic organisers were transcribed to aid de-identification by handwriting; and digital images were used only in the process of the interview and were then filed as password-protected data. Digital images of students and teachers and lesson observation notes were not made available for inclusion in the written report of the research study as per the privacy requirements of university, school systems and schools themselves. Interview transcripts were imported into a computer data base, termed NUD\*IST 4 (Non-numerical Unstructured Data\* Indexing Searching Theorizing). As this program was upgraded, data were later uploaded to the program NVivo 1.3 (QSR International, 2000). The data were then available for coding and modelling within the NVivo program (see Appendix F: List of Project Nodes; Appendix G: Sample of Coded Text).

*Survey Data*

The survey resulted in data obtained from 40 demographic items and 62 attitude items together with three open ended response questions. These latter questions were recorded and coded by content as were responses to “Other” items and all responses were then entered into an Excel (Microsoft Office, 2007) spreadsheet via an optical scanner. Initial coding of variables as string variables was converted to numeric data. The identification number (ID) of each case was used to create a new variable termed “Location” in order to distinguish between cases from rural schools and those from metropolitan schools. All data were then imported into an SPSS (QSR International, 2000). An initial scan of frequency distributions on all items revealed a number of missing values. Most of these were repaired by a manual check on survey forms. Where the data were unavailable from the surveys, a Missing Value Analysis (SPSS) was conducted and missing values were imputed, using the process available in SPSS (SPSS Inc., n.d.).

*Data Analysis**Case Study*

The use of a multi-method approach to data gathering in the case study resulted in a data set obtained from a variety of sources together with accounts from participants which were increasingly informative, reflective, analytical and evaluative. From observation, document review, stimulated recall and pre-and post-lesson discussions, the participants’ decision-making strategies and the professional knowledge base from which these were drawn were investigated in collaboration with the participants.

*Data coding*

Data were coded and organised by themes into qualitative data analysis programs, NUD\*IST 4 and then NVivo 1.3 (QSR International, 2000). This allowed for cross-comparison of cases, the coding and recoding of data as themes emerged from the various data sets created within the case study, and the modelling of theory as the conceptual framework was developed (see Appendix F and Appendix G). Using the

indexing capacity of the program, units of meaning derived from each transcribed interview were identified and categorised using a process of “constant comparison” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 72) (see Appendix G: Sample of Coded Text). Coding allowed comparison of experiences across different interview participants and at different times within the initial teaching timeframe.

Each interview was coded according to tentative categories initially arising from the content of the semi-structured interview schedule. As further interviews were conducted and the survey-questionnaire was analysed, the data from interviews was re-organised to more closely follow the constructs of the research study as they emerged from examination of the literature, the interview data and the survey data. Seven major constructs were identified and data available from all interviews were extracted to match each of these constructs. These construct categories included pre-service experience; career entry; career planning; beginning teaching; professional knowledge base; acquisition of professional knowledge; and precipitating conditions for change (see Appendix F: List of Project Nodes).

Analysis of the interview data relied on qualitative methods, that is, on content analysis of non-numerical data obtained through the use of narrative and graphic organisers. Throughout the period of almost two years over which the interviews were held, data collection and data analysis were interwoven, with analysis informing the subsequent collection and interpretation of new data. This in turn entailed some intervention by the researcher in establishing the agenda of follow-up interviews with participants in order to confirm or refine the interpretations previously arrived at, without disallowing the possibility that new data would reveal new categories or new themes consonant with the change in teachers’ professional knowledge over time.

The content and general themes of each interview were coded and summarised in terms of their content and presenting themes. Within-case and cross-case analyses were undertaken, firstly, to seek common themes within longitudinal experience and, secondly, to seek emergent patterns from both like and unlike cases. Theory building was carried out by a process of constant refinement of concepts and categories as



data collection proceeded. This allowed the researcher to “generalize to theory rather than to teachers in general” (Grossman, 1990, p. 152).

During this process, data analysis was ongoing and inductive (Hatch, 2002), drawing theory from the data, where reflection on the contributions of the participants provided “leads” for new avenues of exploration as the data emerged.

### *Survey–Questionnaire*

The purpose of analysis of the survey data were to explore the relationships between variables of the study in order to investigate from a different perspective the research questions which had governed the development of the interview schedules. In analysing the survey it was accepted that the use of an opportunity sample and the relatively small size of the survey cohort precluded the use of statistical procedures appropriate for a random sample of participants (normally distributed) and hence descriptive statistical procedures appropriate to non-parametric data were utilised (Pallant, 2005, p. 286).

### *Parametric or nonparametric statistics*

A series of frequency tests were conducted on items Question 9 to Q 14 and histograms were plotted against a normal distribution curve. The standard deviation from the mean was noted. On most items, the distribution of data was negatively skewed and the scores fell towards the high end of the scale. Since the distributions were moderately skewed, it was decided that “the median was a more representative and appropriate descriptive measure of central tendency than the mean” (Tilley, 1996, p. 78). Combined with the facts that the sample could not be regarded as a random sample and data were scaled by means of a Likert scale producing ordinal rather than interval data, it was decided to take the more cautious option of employing nonparametric tests in analysis (Burns, 2000, pp. 151-153).

### *Frequency distributions*

Demographic information was contained in eight items, three of which permitted multiple responses to elicit the complexity of the teacher’s initial teaching

experience, pre-service experience and applications for employment to different systems of education. (see Q 1, Q 5 and Q 6 in Appendix I). Q 1 was considered critical to the analysis of employment contexts and experience and established that respondents identified a total of eighteen possible combinations of experience ranging in levels of cohesion from “very fractured” to “very cohesive”. Sixty-one per cent of respondents had a range of experiences as a casual teacher and 39 per cent were permanent teachers by the end of the first year of teaching. One variable with each of 18 values was used to match each case with its own “level of cohesion” from 1 (low) to 18 (high). These levels were created by designing a matrix which covered all possible responses to Q 1. Two other new variables were created by computing new variables to indicate a difference in class-based experience and to differentiate between permanent and casual teachers.

### *Recoding of variables*

Where demographic data had resulted in variables (whether original or recoded) with more than two values, recoding into further new variables was completed to simplify the data to two categories for each demographic variable and hence prepare the data for bivariate analysis. Questions 4, 5 and 6 were therefore each treated as multiple response questions, and recoded to represent categories of responses appropriate to the research aims and the intended analysis.

This resulted in a set of categories which could be used as the independent variables in both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. The categories formed were as follows: age (*25 years and under* and *over 25 years*); gender (*male* and *female*); prior work experience (*No prior work* and *prior work*); and qualifications (*initial* and *postgraduate*). These constituted a set of personal attributes which were independent of the employment context at the time. A further set of professional circumstances—those describing the context of employment—was computed from the remaining demographic variables. Location (*rural* and *metropolitan*) was obtained from the original survey ID numbers which represented districts and schools; employment status from Question 1 (*permanent* and *casual*); number of schools in which teachers had worked from Question 2 (*more than one school* and *only one school*); and the

extent of own-class-based experience from Question 1 (*class-based* and *limited class-based*).

#### *Analysing open response questions*

Items termed Question 15, Question 16 and Question 17 provided opportunity for respondents to contribute a range of ideas on their learning directions for their second year of teaching and the reasons why they had become teachers. These items were designed to collect data on areas of interest to respondents that may not have been captured in the forced-response items of the questionnaire; there were frequently multiple responses from one respondent to each question. Their responses were treated as multiple response items and were coded accordingly.

Individual comments were then transcribed to an Excel spreadsheet and sorted according to coding categories. Coded responses were entered into SPSS. SPSS data and were sorted for analysis (using Crosstabs) according to age, employment status and experience in schools and with classes, location, and gender.

#### *Self-reporting of teacher experience*

Six items (Question 9, Question 10, Question 11, Question 12, Question 13 and Question 14) were designed to collect data on teachers' perceptions of their first year of teaching (see Table 3.12). These items were written as stem statements with a number of responses and respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement in response to each option. Responses were scaled from 1 to 5 with 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree. The issues explored in these items are detailed in Table 3.12. Responses to these items were collated and analysed through SPSS (SPSS Inc., 2007).

Transformative and descriptive statistical procedures followed by the use of inferential statistical tests were used to analyse the data extracted from these items.

Table 3.12 *Description of Survey Items Using Likert Scales*

Item	Topic	Description
Q9:	Change in knowledge of teaching	This question explored a range of practical issues which were anticipated to be of concern to early career teachers.
Q 10:	School experiences	This question considered whether first year teachers were being given responsibilities and experiences outside their classrooms, and access to whole school /district/ departmental personnel and/or information.
Q11	People who contributed to my development	This question was intended to collect data related to those whom beginning teachers regarded as their mentors, whether officially designated as such or not.
Q 12:	To improve my teaching ...	This question considered the ways teachers chose in order to increase their knowledge of teaching practice.
Q 13:	Difficulties encountered	These items explored a range of difficulties commonly experienced by beginning teachers.
Q 14:	Next year I would like to ....	This question looked at the career preferences for beginning teachers in the following year.

*Internal consistency*

Internal consistency or reliability of the scale of each set of items contained within each of the above attitude questions was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha process (Burns, 2000; Pallant, 2005, pp. 90-92). The scales produced the alpha coefficients as shown in Table 3.13.

This latter table shows that four items (Question 9, Question 10, Question 13 and Question 14) were considered to have good internal consistency while Question 12 was considered acceptable, given the number of items in the scale (that is, fewer than 10 ) (Pallant, 2005, p. 90). The reliability of the scale used in Question 11 was further investigated by examining the sub-scales. A small sub-scale of the first two items produced an alpha coefficient of .637 which was considered acceptable. Other items in Question 11 appeared to be independent of each other.

Table 3.13 *Internal Consistency of Questionnaire Items*

Question	Items	Alpha coefficient
Question 9	14	.848
Question 10	10	.808
Question 11	5	.397
Question 12	8	.646
Question 13	15	.841
Question 14	14	.725

*Data Reduction*

A total of 102 items were identified with up to five values for each. In order to make the data more manageable for analysis, several processes of data reduction were employed. Using factor analysis, each question was interrogated independently of any other. The analysis was conducted using SPSS and principal components were extracted, rotated using a varimax rotation and then examined for the resulting rotated component analysis. From this analysis sixteen principal components were extracted and examined for consistency in underlying construct. A reliability analysis was then conducted, again using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency of each component.

Once reliability of the sub-scale was established, the variables comprising each component were added to make a set of new variables. From the original data set of 102 variables, the working set comprised six rescaled variables representing overarching constructs within which there were identified sub-sets of rescaled variables comprising groups of items from the original data set. Frequencies of all new variables were run. Three values for each variable were computed from the new range of frequencies identifying the range of scores of the 30 per cent most positive responses (value 1); those who were neutral (value 2); and the 30 per cent who were least positive (value 3). This reduction in data to 22 new and rescaled variables enabled descriptive and inferential procedures to be carried out efficiently (see Table 3.14).

A number of statistical tests were utilised to gain an understanding of the experiences of respondents. Initially, univariate tests were used to obtain frequency distributions which provided information at the most basic level of the number of responses to all items. This provided background demographic data together with an overview of the descriptions of respondents' experience in Question 9 to Question 14. In order to further analyse responses, bivariate tests (cross-tabulations) were run to refine understanding of the demographics of the sample population and identify links between demographic characteristics and professional experience.

#### *Descriptive statistics and association*

In order to analyse the strength of association with categorical and other variables, chi-square tests for independence (Pallant, 2005, p. 287) were conducted on all scaled variables (both original and recoded) with all demographic categorical variables, recoded to two categories. Inspection of the results of these tests identified large numbers of results which indicated statistically significant associations at the level of  $p < 0.1$ ,  $p < .05$ , and  $p < 0.01$ .

An examination of the professional circumstances of the respondents also was undertaken by means of a frequency distribution conducted on recoded variables with respect to location, status, number of schools and level of class-based experience. These too were tested using chi-square a similar inspection of the results of these tests identified results which indicated statistically significant associations at the level of  $p < 0.1$ ,  $p < .05$ , and  $p < 0.01$ .

#### *Nonparametric inferential tests*

A number of nonparametric inferential statistical tests were conducted in order to further examine the relationships between personal and professional circumstances and attitudes to beginning teaching. Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was used to calculate the strength of relationship between items represented in items Question 9 to Question 13 (that is, those items using Likert scales).

Table 3.14 *New Variables from Factor Analysis, Recoding and Rescaling*

Overarching construct variable	Principal component variables	Components	Reliability co-efficient Cronbach's $\alpha$
Practical knowledge (All items in Q 9) $\alpha = .848$	Planning for teaching	Q 9 g, h, j, k, l, m, n	$\alpha = .795$
	Inclusive practice	Q 9 c, d, e	$\alpha = .719$
	Teacher -student relationships	Q 9 a, b, i, f	$\alpha = .718$
Participation (all items in Q 10) $\alpha = .808$	Group participation	Q 10 f, g, h, i, j	$\alpha = .795$
	Professional development	Q 10 d, e	$\alpha = .637$
	Individual participation	Q 10 a, b, c	$\alpha = .639$
Mentors (all items in Q 11) $\alpha = .397$	Mentors within school	Q 11 a, b	$\alpha = .726$
	Mentors outside school	Q 11 c, d, e	$\alpha = .314$
Improving teaching (all items in Q 12) $\alpha = .555$	Public methods	Q 12 a, b, e, f	$\alpha = .534$
	Private methods	Q 12 c, d, g	$\alpha = .469$

Chi-square tests (Burns, 2000, pp. 226-230; Pallant, 2005, pp. 287-291) were used to identify significant differences and inspection of cross tabulation data were used to suggest the direction of the difference, in those situations where rejection of the null hypothesis was indicated by the results.

### *Integrating Data Analysis*

This research study made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data gathering and analysis, in order to achieve both greater density of description and greater triangulation of findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.44). The results of the qualitative analysis were compared with the results of the quantitative analysis of the survey-questionnaire.

Table 3.15 *New Variables from Factor Analysis, Recoding and Rescaling*

Overarching construct variable	Principal component variables	Components	Reliability co-efficient Cronbach's $\alpha$
Practical knowledge (All items in Q 9) $\alpha = .848$	Planning for teaching	Q 9 g, h, j, k, l, m, n	$\alpha = .795$
	Inclusive practice	Q 9 c, d, e	$\alpha = .719$
	Teacher -student relationships	Q 9 a, b, i, f	$\alpha = .718$
Participation (all items in Q 10) $\alpha = .808$	Group participation	Q 10 f, g, h, i, j	$\alpha = .795$
	Professional development	Q 10 d, e	$\alpha = .637$
	Individual participation	Q 10 a, b, c	$\alpha = .639$
Mentors (all items in Q 11) $\alpha = .397$	Mentors within school	Q 11 a, b	$\alpha = .726$
	Mentors outside school	Q 11 c, d, e	$\alpha = .314$
Improving teaching (all items in Q 12) $\alpha = .555$	Public methods	Q 12 a, b, e, f	$\alpha = .534$
	Private methods	Q 12 c, d, g	$\alpha = .469$
Difficulties (all items in Q 13) $\alpha = .844$	Gaining support	Q 13 b, c, d, e	$\alpha = .871$
	Students	Q 13 a, m, n, h	$\alpha = .754$
	Programming	Q 13 k, j, i, l	$\alpha = .768$
	Uncertainty	Q13 f, g	$\alpha = .336$
Career choices (all items in Q 14) $\alpha = .725$	Career in teaching (non-permanent)	(Q 14 b, c, d, e)	$\alpha = .814$
	Career outside teaching in NSW	(Q 14 f, i, h)	$\alpha = .736$
		Q 14 a and Q 14 g,	no scale reliability)

As tentative findings emerged, constant comparative analysis within and between both sets of data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 2008) enabled the refining of theoretical and practical findings in response to the research aims of the research study and the confirmation or disconfirmation of initial findings.



The use of several methods of data collection both within and between the two major data collection methods enabled the researcher to assess the degree to which findings derived from the results obtained from one method were confirmed or challenged by those arising from analysis of the results of the other (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative case study data, therefore, were complemented by numerical and non-numerical data obtained from the survey-questionnaire at the end of the first year of teaching. The quantitative data arising from this survey provided point-in-time data from a broad educational context with which to compare and contrast the longitudinal data arising from the more limited employment and geographic context of the interviews.

### *Summary of Chapter 3*

This chapter has considered the question of research approach and described a study located in a constructivist view of knowledge. It has also delineated the iterative multi-site, multi-person and multi-method nature of the data gathering methods embedded in the research design and the implications of this in terms of the data collection and data analysis processes. The processes of data collection, data organisation and data analysis for the case study and for the survey-questionnaire have been described.

In the following chapter, the results obtained from the data analysis processes will be discussed in the context of the research aim and Research Question 1.

## Chapter 4 Results: Research Question 1

### *Introduction*

This chapter is the first of three which report the results of data analysis from the collective case study (Stake, 1995, 2000) and from the survey-questionnaire, entitled *Beginning teaching: The experience of primary teachers in NSW* (see Appendix I). In these chapters the results of both modes of the study are related to the research aim and to each of the research questions. In addressing the research aim, namely to investigate the effect of differentiated employment experience on the development of the knowledge base of beginning teachers in New South Wales, the results of data analysis were collated to address each of the following Research Questions:

1. What changes in teacher knowledge were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching?
2. What personal and professional factors may have contributed to differences in teachers' experience of beginning teaching?
3. How did differences in teachers' experience affect the development of their knowledge base of teaching?

This chapter is concerned with Research Question 1.

### *Mixed Mode Methods of Data Collection*

The mixed mode methodology of this study (i) enabled the formation of a broad picture of the experience of beginning teachers at the end of the first year of teaching drawn from the survey data, complemented by the development from the case study data of an understanding of the journey travelled by beginning teachers from the beginning to the end of the first year, and (ii) a further description of the process by which the experiences of the first year were carried forward into decisions made during the second year of teaching. The use of both methods of data collection resulted in the establishment of complementary sets of data which in turn facilitated both cross-set as well as within-set comparative analysis.

*Survey data*

The survey data produced a point-in-time picture of teacher development close to the conclusion of the first year wherein respondents, in reflecting on the knowledge they had gained, indicated the change in their knowledge base in several areas of learning. Respondents reported gains in personal practical knowledge of classroom teaching and in knowledge of the socialisation processes in schools together with reference to the processes they had chosen to use in order to make such changes. Respondents also indicated changes in their growing professional identity in the ways they had chosen to improve their teaching, their response to the difficulties they had met and their future career aspirations. As well, open-ended response items gave survey respondents opportunity to identify the reasons for their decision to enter teaching and their self-identified areas for development in the second year of teaching.

*Case study data*

The case study approach allowed a more exploratory methodology which also considered both the content of reported changes to the knowledge base of participants and the processes through which participants made such changes. The experiences of participants in the collective case study were explored by the researcher working with participants over a period of two years utilising a range of data collection methods. These included semi-structured interviews which incorporated stimulated recall processes and a range of graphic organisers to record personal reflection, classroom observations and document analysis. The case study, therefore, provided a longitudinal view of the content and process of knowledge acquisition throughout the first year and its development in the second year of teaching. The case study data were instrumental in amplifying the necessarily aggregated and static view of teaching presented by the survey data into one which took account of the nuances of individual and personal attributes and experience reflected in the lived experiences of teachers over time. This individual teacher-centred approach acknowledged –the situated and personal nature, not just of teacher practice, but of teacher growth: an individual amalgam of practice, meanings and context (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002, p. 965).

*Mixed Mode Methods of Data Analysis*

Data analyses were carried out with a view to considering the experiences of beginning teachers from five perspectives. These were:

1. Point-of-time, summative reflection on the first year of teaching was obtained from the quantitative and qualitative data of the survey at the end of the first year of teaching. The quantitative data was analysed using a variety of univariate and bivariate statistical tests while the qualitative data was analysed to extract and compare emergent themes.
2. Formative reflection representing the experiences of case study participants in their two-year journey was obtained during three periods designated as Phase 1 (first semester of teaching); Phase 2 (second semester of teaching); and Phase 3 (second year of teaching) from analysis of interview data. Analysis comprised constant comparison of data within and between cases and was framed according to the theoretical modelling of teacher career phases and stages referred to in the literature review.
3. Critical reflection on teaching practice was prompted by the use of a stimulated recall process resulting in digital images of classroom events at each of Interviews 2 and 3. Teacher reflection was further enhanced by reference to document and artefact analysis and researcher observations.
4. From the formative case study data examination of longitudinal data over three phases of experience provided an opportunity to explore not only the nature of the reported changes in teacher knowledge over the first two years, but also the personal and professional factors which may have contributed to differentiation in the development of teacher knowledge. This in turn was compared with the demographic data provided in the survey which also indicated a range of personal and professional factors affecting teacher development.
5. From both the survey and the case study data, the effect of variations in the employment context on the content and process of development of the knowledge base was explored. In structuring the analysis in this way, aspects of stage theory were explored and consideration was given to the

development of the beginning teacher's knowledge base as an iterative process with content, context and timing implications.

### *Organisation of the Chapter*

In this chapter the perceived changes in teacher knowledge that were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching through either the survey-questionnaire or the case study are presented.

In exploring this topic which constitutes the content of Research Question 1, the following structure is used:

The chapter sets out a conceptualisation of the knowledge base of teaching, drawn from both the literature and the data (see Figure 3). Teacher knowledge has been conceptualised from the literature as comprising three domains of knowledge – personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher.

Each domain of knowledge has been explored according to aspects which arose from analysis of the survey-questionnaire. These aspects are delineated in Figure 3 below and comprise fundamental teaching activities and relationships. Survey respondents and case study participants commented on the level of personal gain in knowledge of these aspects as well as identifying difficulties they experienced in any one of these.

In order to facilitate comparison of results between data sets, each aspect of each domain is addressed by discussing firstly, the results of the survey-questionnaire, and secondly, the results of the case study.

This analysis provides a foundation for further chapters which consider the personal and professional factors impinging on teacher experience; and the way in which variations in experience result in differences in teacher knowledge development.

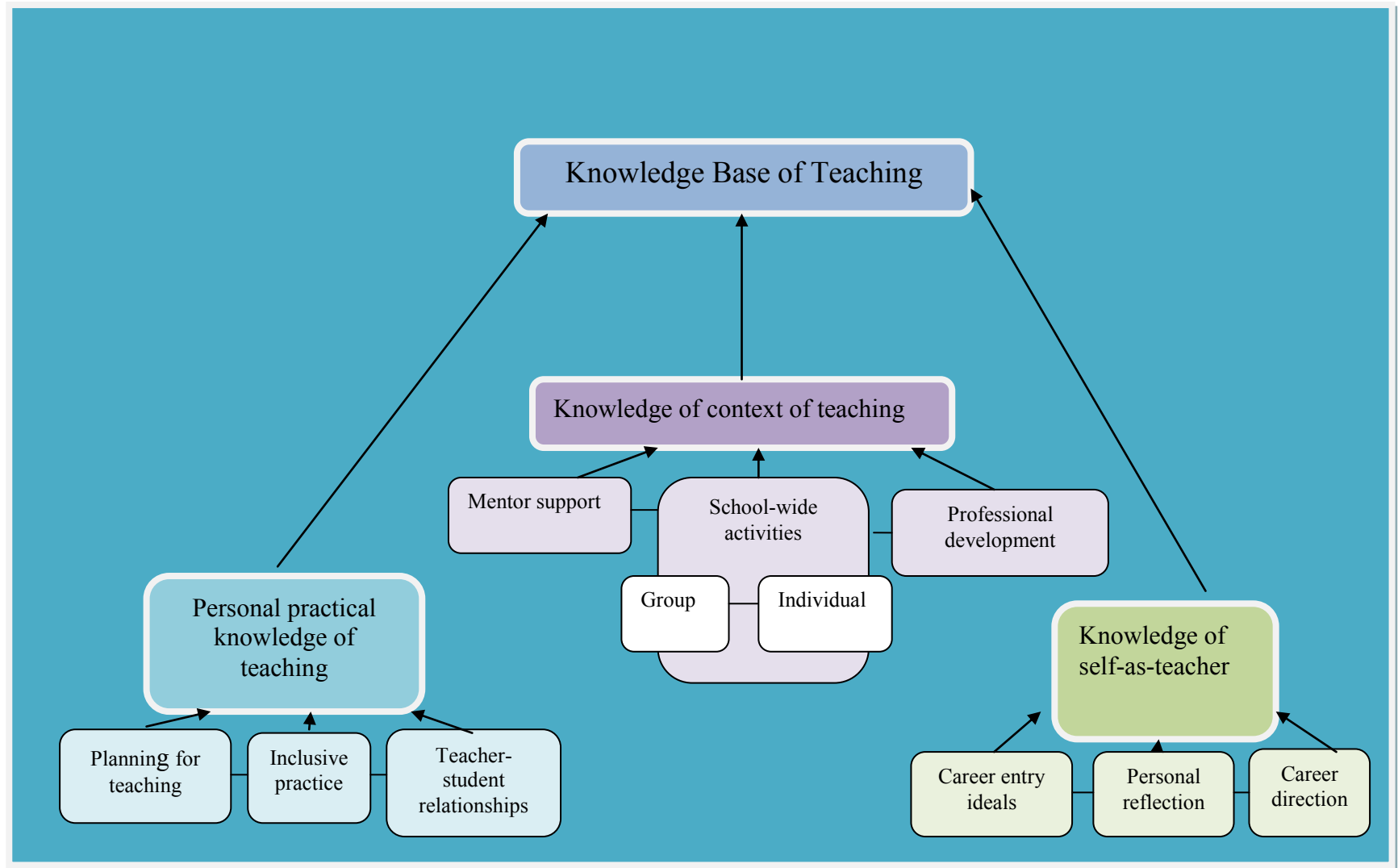


Figure 3. Conceptualisation of domains and aspects of teacher knowledge

*Research Question 1*

What changes in teacher knowledge were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching?

This question was addressed by research which investigated reported changes (i) in teachers' personal practical knowledge of teaching; (ii) in their knowledge of the context of teaching; and (iii) in their knowledge of self-as-teacher. In addressing this research question, cross-case and within-case analysis of case study data were complemented by descriptive statistical analysis of survey data to explore perceived gain in knowledge by the end of the first year of teaching. Case study data alone were then used to describe the progression of knowledge into the second year of teaching. Case study data concerning participants' experiences in each domain of knowledge were derived from analysis of data from the successive interviews conducted with each participant and from the associated data collection methods. These interviews represented three successive phases in the first two years of teaching and the data produced understandings about the progression of teacher learning which were to a limited extent substantiated by the aggregated data from the survey.

*Changes in Personal Practical Knowledge of Teaching*

The domain of personal practical knowledge of teaching is represented diagrammatically in Figure 4. The three key aspects which emerged from factor analysis of survey data were those of (i) planning for teaching; (ii) implementing inclusive practice in teaching; and (iii) developing positive teacher–student relationships. Each of these aspects of teacher knowledge was further investigated by reference to a number of sub-aspects derived from a range of teacher activities undertaken in relation to each aspect.

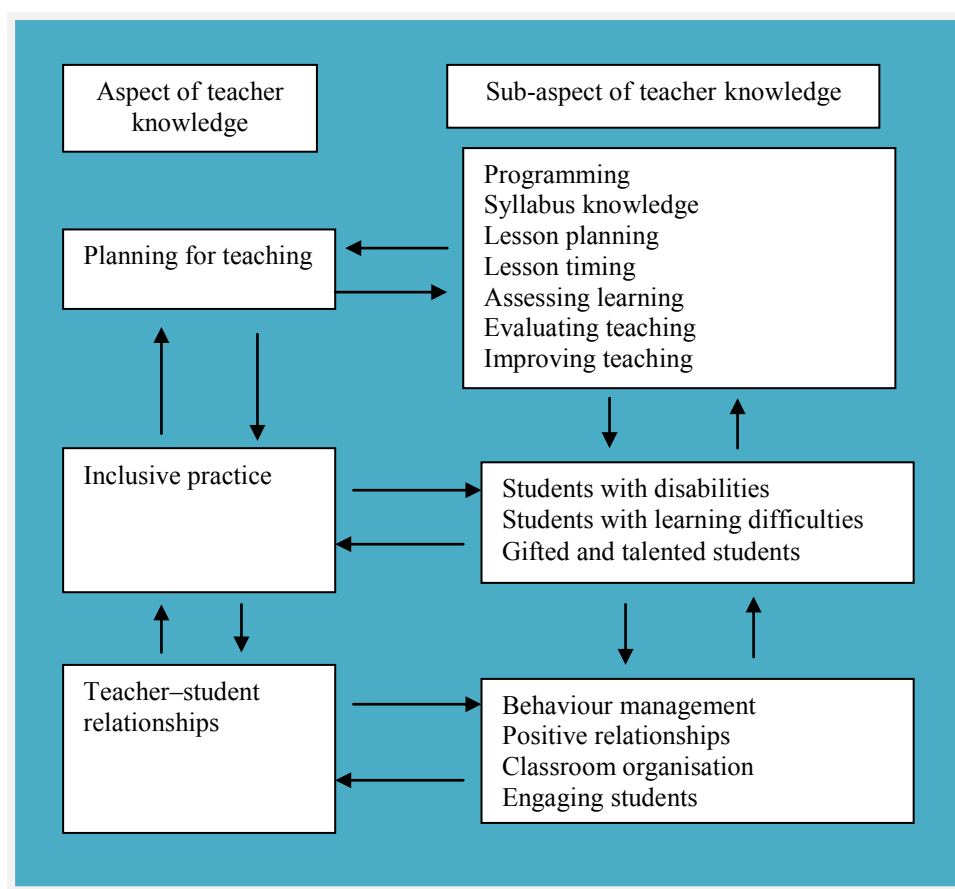


Figure 4. Construct of the domain of personal practical knowledge of teaching

### *Changes in Knowledge of Planning for Teaching*

#### *Survey Data about Planning for Teaching*

Data drawn from the survey suggested that most respondents believed that they had made positive gains in this aspect of their knowledge base by the end of the first year. When contributing activities were examined, that is, programming, syllabus knowledge, lesson planning, lesson timing, assessing student learning, evaluating teaching and improving teaching, a high percentage of respondents agreed that they had gained in knowledge of each of these aspects (see Table 4.1). Most teachers expressed confidence about gains made in knowledge of lesson timing and in knowledge of ways of improving their teaching. Areas where fewer teachers perceived gains were those of evaluating teaching and programming. Of these two



latter areas, it was the area of programming which was identified as an area of difficulty both in the forced response items and in the open response questions

Table 4.1 *Increase in Knowledge of Planning for Teaching*

Aspect of planning for teaching	Respondents who reported knowing more about planning for teaching	
	n	%
Programming	194	81
Syllabus	205	85
Lesson planning	206	86
Lesson timing	223	93
Assessing learning	209	87
Evaluating teaching	193	80
Improving teaching	222	92

Results from the survey-questionnaire (see Table 4.1) indicated that of all the aspects related to planning for teaching, programming remained an issue for some respondents even at the end of the first year of teaching. Although 81 per cent of respondents reported that they had gained in knowledge of programming in the course of the first year, 44 per cent of respondents, in response to another item identifying the difficulties they had experienced, agreed or strongly agreed with the item referring to difficulties in acquiring an adequate knowledge of programming for all students. (See Appendix I, Question 13(i)). In response to an open-ended question concerning further learning in the second year, 66 respondents (27 per cent) made specific reference to a need for improved skills in programming. The open response question provided opportunity for respondents to identify in more detail their areas for development in planning. Respondents identified being able to program for a longer period, integrating better knowledge of the syllabus into their programs and simplifying the process and product of programming as areas to learn more about in their second year.

Related to the question of programming was that of syllabus knowledge. As a specific topic, it was raised in both open response items as an area for development

(16 per cent of responses) and as a general concern. Respondents (identified below by the ID number of the survey instrument) identified concerns with “fitting in” all syllabus requirements (SR 090201); and planning from the syllabus, “rather than planning activities then relating it back to the syllabus” (SR270103); as well as more general concerns with knowing and understanding curriculum requirements.

Of those survey-respondents who nominated programming as a key professional learning priority for their second year (28 per cent of the total cohort), one-third were permanent teachers and two-thirds were casual teachers; a little over half had ongoing class-based experience while just under half had had limited class-based experience. The desire to “sort out” the problem of programming appeared to be as important to teachers in fragmented positions who had limited expectation of preparing or using one as it was to those in ongoing and cohesive positions who were required to produce a teaching program each term.

#### *Case Study Data about Planning for Teaching*

Although all case study teachers had constructed units of work and related lesson plans in the course of their initial teacher education, all found the process of planning for teaching difficult and time consuming in the first two terms of teaching.

#### *Initial difficulties in planning and programming*

There was a persistent sense of “muddling through” in the accounts of case study participants. Permanent and temporary teachers with ongoing responsibility for a class were required to prepare a teaching program detailing their plans across all curriculum areas for the ten weeks of each term. Despite this expectation these teachers consistently reported planning for teaching on a day-by-day basis.

#### *(i) Planning separated from teaching*

The purpose of planning and programming in order to promote learning and the connection between assessment of student learning and subsequent planning were not visible in concept mapping until Phase 3 (see Appendix D), that is, until the second year of teaching. Participants’ concept maps indicate that the inclusion or

omission of planning and programming as a constituent of teaching was dependent on the responsibilities that teachers had at the stage of construction (see Table 4.2). At this stage, all teachers expressed awareness of minimal knowledge of their students, generalised knowledge only of the syllabus outcomes to be addressed across six learning areas (Board of Studies NSW, n.d.), limited understanding of the scope and sequence of learning activities planned by the school, and very limited understanding of the sequencing and integration of skills and activities that would lead to successful achievement of outcomes. For example, Fiona, concerned with meticulous and complete documentation, noted the unanticipated links to Physical Education and to Mathematics that occurred within her dance lesson and in the course of a lesson observation she asked a typical question: “How do you sit down and write everything that you’ve done in a day and make it go into the syllabus documents...?” (Fiona, Interview 2).

Case study participants initially struggled with the aspect of their teaching related to planning and programming and found it difficult simultaneously to plan for teaching on a long-term basis and engage in day-to-day classroom practice. As a consequence, daily planning and longer-term planning were initially regarded as separate and unrelated activities.

#### *(ii) Planning as out-of-school activity*

Planning for teaching, whether in the form of daily plans for casual teaching assignments or programs for longer-term teaching occupied much of the out-of-class time of all participants at the early stage of teaching. Lesson plans at this stage were compiled both as a means of structuring the teaching day and week and as a means of managing students’ behaviour.

For the most part, it appeared that in the early weeks of teaching, the compilation of plans and programs was an individual activity, undertaken often in the evenings and at weekends and rarely in collaboration with others in the school community. For Alison, programming and planning was done during her weekends and was perceived as “... absolutely separate to what I do day-to-day” (Alison, Interview 1). However, she also recognised that she was dependent on comprehensive pre-lesson

planning and commented: “I find that I just have to know what I’m doing and have everything done because I just don’t get time to think during the day” (Alison, Interview 1).

All teachers initially constructed their programs in their own time. Evan described the process of programming as one of “chipping away” as he worked on a small part of his program each night, a process quite separate from the lesson planning, classroom timetabling and behaviour management programs he had set up for his daily teaching. He described his programming process as follows:

Each afternoon I sort of take a subject home and you know, do a bit of work on it because generally I find that if I think I'm going to sit back and leave it till the weekend well, it just won't get done 'cause the weekend's for the weekend really... so I try and take something home each night ... I might finish, you know, a certain part off ... I might have a look at it and see what I have to fix up and leave myself a little note on it on the side so then I know when I go back I'm that little bit further ahead than what I would have been if I had've left it.. so ...I keep chipping away (Evan, Interview 1).

Alison and Helen reported similar use of private time, usually on the weekends and in the holidays, for programming. Helen described her programming process:

I just sort of sit down and I’ll take a day out for each...you know, or for English and maths particularly...that’s kind of almost a day to do...and I’ll just sit and go through all the things that yeah, I’ve learned at uni or...and sometimes I will pull out different notes and things from back at uni, talk to other teachers a lot, and sort of...“Oh look, I’m trying to teach this thing...you know... whatever it might be...and what would you do?”...and they’ll come up with different things...but yeah, a lot of it’s just out of my head but ...I think and I try things I’ve been really excited about... just trying things that I’ve thought about before ...and never been able to try...so done a lot of that but yeah, English particularly, I rely really heavily on the syllabus because I really carefully go through the indicators ...and I’m really concerned about getting all that in (Helen, Interview 1).

The lack of connection between teaching and programming meant that for teachers in the early weeks of teaching, programming was primarily an administrative task, unrelated to their primary goal of in-class survival. The problem of relationship between programming and teaching was ongoing: the issue of disconnection between

teaching and the written program posed continuing paradoxes that beginning teachers found difficult to resolve.

At this stage, longer-term programming for those in ongoing continuing class-based positions seemed to be an activity by the teacher for others, particularly for the senior staff of the school. Recognition of the intrinsic value of planning and programming to teaching and especially to students' learning was limited.

*(iii) Program inflexibility*

A further issue identified by participants was that of using programs inflexibly without due consideration for the effect on their students. Once the program was constructed, teachers tended to rely heavily on following it rigidly as a way of fulfilling the requirements of the mandated syllabus and of knowing "where they were going" on a daily basis. For example, Helen identified her initial rigidity in adhering to her program as something she was only able to release as she moved into Phase 2 of teaching:

The first time that I wrote my English unit I very much stuck to it for the first term...it's Week 5 and I'm meant to be doing this and I'll do it. In Term 2, I started to think, no, they haven't got all the sight words from Term 1 so why am I starting on Term 2 sight words just because it says "Term 2 sight words"...I'm going to get to the end and yes, I'm going to have done everything I wrote down, but I'm going to have lost half of them on the way. (Helen, Interview 1).

Knowledge of programming was initially drawn almost directly from either university or practicum experiences: the immediacy of needing to "know where I am going" drew each teacher back into information made available in pre-service courses. Helen described the process of formulating her teaching program:

[B]lock out the outcome, block out the indicators and then brainstorm a whole heap of activities....some from uni, quite a lot from other teachers and then some of them are just out of my head (Helen, Interview 1).

*Improving planning and programming**(i) Sequencing teaching for future learning*

As teachers in continuing, cohesive school-based and class-based positions moved into the second phase of their teaching, they were able to draw on resources available through the school to align programs more directly with the requirements of the school and the needs of their students. They reported greater confidence in working with the prescribed syllabus and improved understanding of ways of sequencing lessons and units to achieve particular outcomes. Evan reported his growing understanding of the purpose of programming as preparing students for later conceptual development as he reflected on improvements he wanted to make to his program in his second term. He said:

I know initially I'd teach something and three weeks later think, wow, if I had known that I was going to be teaching this...or next term had to teach this, I could have expanded on a certain area a little bit more which would have helped them when we get to this point (Evan, Interview 2).

Evan was concerned to gain control over the sequencing of his lesson planning. By the end of Phase 2, he could look back over almost four terms and see a change in his perception of programming. He reported:

Where early on in the piece as far as I could see was about three or four weeks in advance, I couldn't actually see how you could actually know what you were going to be doing so far down the track [that is, in Term 4]. Having been to this point [end of the first year] and knowing I'm going to be teaching the same grade next year, I can see how you can make that link... (Evan, Interview 2),

*(ii) Coping with compressed timeframes*

As Phase 1 moved into Phase 2, teachers in classrooms were prepared to adopt more realistic views on timeframes for the achievement of program outcomes. Cate observed:

And some things, you just have to say, ~~Well~~, we don't have time for that"...in the classroom even, we don't have time for that and not stress about it...like we haven't got through the entire program that I

wrote for HSIE [Human Society and Its Environment] and I just thought, well, we don't have time (Cate, Interview 2).

*(iii) Relating programming to teaching*

As the first year progressed, a year during which teachers in ongoing and cohesive positions had prepared several programs, there were significant changes in the skills they demonstrated in terms of using the program to manage not just the teaching process but also the learning of their students. Evan described the improved integration of his program with his teaching:

I've got to the point where now if anyone asks me what am I doing with a particular part of English or maths I can actually go to my program and say, yeah...because I've got it all set there in front of me, so yeah, it's becoming a little bit more clear whereas for a while there it was as clear as mud. If I've got a program organised then I know that my term is organised or my year is organised, so I've come to the realisation of how that actually all fits together a bit (Evan, Interview 2).

*(iv) Programming and individual student need*

Alison's programs were a reflection of the extensive time and intellectual effort she put into her teaching. Meticulously prepared, based on all that she had come to respect in the method of rich task planning, her programs also made allowance for the range of students she taught. By the end of the first year, however, Alison had recognised the limitations in her early programs and acknowledged the need to know her students in order to prepare even more appropriate programs for them:

I feel that I'm only just going to start to get to know these kids and they'll be gone...I really think ...you should see the way I would have programmed for them next year... (Alison, Interview 2).

At this stage, the end of Phase 2, Alison saw her programming and planning as a positive aspect of her work and one she expected would be "clearer" in the following year: "being able to see...what you are going to do, where you want to take them from Term 1 to Term 4... I think I'll be a bit more clear about that next year" (Alison, Interview 3).

By this time, Alison and Cate were both prepared to interrupt their programs to respond to student interests and the rigidity and concern for completing plans that had characterised the first phase (or the persistent worry when rigidity broke down and programs were incomplete) were replaced by the end of the year by a greater level of satisfaction as teachers developed a mix of structure and spontaneity in response to their students' interests and needs. Cate reported:

I think in the real world you realise that you're not going to get through the entire syllabus and you think about this...it always comes back to the prioritising and you think about what do these kids really need to know...?( Cate, Interview 2).

*(v) Programming for student learning*

Perhaps the most significant change in teacher understanding of the purpose and process of planning and programming was in the growing realisation that an understanding of student prior learning provided the pedagogically effective foundation of new planning. Evan's growing understanding of the link between assessment and future planning and programming was something that surprised and pleased him:

...programming, knowing what to teach, assessment...find out what the students know and once you've found out what they know, well, then you are able to [program]...it [assessment] sort of impacts on what you teach because if they don't [know]...if you think they know something else... then you go shooting off in front of them...well, then you'll just leave them all behind... you're always having to go back to go forward...(Evan, Interview3).



Table 4.2 *Summary of Information about Planning Taken from Concept Maps*

Participant	First concept map	Second concept map	Third concept map
Alison	–Planning & Programming” constituted half the concepts; included planning for students and planning for –school”; both are separated from teaching	Programming takes less attention and is related to classroom and behaviour management	Programming is again a focus but is now related to longer-term planning.
Bianca	Programming is not included as a concept	Programming is identified as something that is –lacking”	Not included
Cate	Syllabus understanding is included; programming as such is not	Planning is included	Neither planning nor programming is included
Dianne	A focus on the quantity of content to be acquired	Planning and preparation are included; the concern for curriculum knowledge persists	Not available
Evan	Planning and programming are related to management of both the classroom and behaviour and are separated from assessment and evaluation	Planning is related to work with mentor but is separated from management and assessment	Programming is clearly linked to assessment and links are clear between knowledge of –what to teach” and knowledge of –what the students know”
Fiona	–Setting tasks”	Not included	Not included
Graham	Related syllabus knowledge to student results	–Programs in place” was related to support from other teachers; a separate concern was registered in terms of syllabus knowledge and –what to teach”	Not included
Helen			Syllabus support through resources

### *Changes in Knowledge of Inclusive Practice*

The second aspect considered under the domain of personal practical knowledge of teaching was that of inclusivity in teaching practice, that is, planning and teaching with due regard for student diversity. There were a number of issues that arose for teachers in relation to addressing the issue of diversity of student ability in classrooms. Teachers' expectations of themselves as teachers appeared to grow as their knowledge of their students grew. As they became aware of their students' needs, the task of meeting these needs often appeared to be overwhelming. Inclusive practice was an area in which all teachers appeared to diminish in self-confidence as they increasingly recognised the issues and the demands and, at the same time, acknowledged their own inability to deal effectively with them.

#### *Survey Data about Inclusive Practice*

Knowledge of inclusivity involved the capacity of the teacher to incorporate into the activities of the classroom teaching plans, programs, strategies and activities that met the needs of students who were disabled, had learning difficulties or who were designated as gifted and/or talented. Teachers were far less confident in their knowledge gain by the end of the first year in this area than in the area of planning for teaching (compare Table 4.1 and Table 4.3) and 53 respondents (22 per cent) identified catering for children with special needs as an area for development in their second year of teaching in a later open response item.

Table 4.3 *Increase in Knowledge of Inclusive Practice*

Aspect of inclusivity	n	%
Students with learning difficulties	187	77
Students with disabilities	122	51
Students who are gifted and/or talented	114	47

*Case Study Data about Inclusive Practice*

The data reported in Table 4.3 are reflected in the experiences of the case study participants. They, too, differed in their response to students with special needs according to whether or not they were teaching in cohesive or fragmented situations. The key issue in developing appropriate responses to individual students' needs was that of becoming familiar with the child; teachers who remained in casual positions (e.g., Dianne and Bianca) had little opportunity to come to an understanding of students in their classes who may have needed differentiated approaches and they were aware of situations in which they had inadvertently escalated a situation through not knowing the child, the background to the issue or the appropriate response.

There was little awareness reported via concept maps (see Table 4.4) of students with special needs until the second semester of teaching when some participants with access to their own class had begun to be aware of differences in their students' welfare and learning needs. The second semester interview data showed that they were able to report a range of strategies they had used to understand and respond to those in their classrooms who had demonstrated needs which could not be met by the whole class instructional techniques of the early weeks of teaching. As they became increasingly aware of differences among the students in their classes, they were inclined to be overwhelmed by the range of difference in their students and to have difficulty meeting the needs of each child other than in a token way.

Evan, discussing an approaching meeting with regard to a child ~~with~~ "integration" relied for information and support on the integration aide who had been working closely with the child but found it daunting that he knew little about the topic under discussion. He reported:

I [didn't] know what to expect in regard to what I'm supposed to take to the meeting or what's supposed to come from the meeting...she's got results for different things and I think...what's that about, so that's probably something where I probably should see someone and just say, ~~What~~ "What does this mean?" (Evan, Interview 1).

Teachers reported using a variety of strategies related to individual students in their classes as they became aware of particular needs: seeking advice from specialist teachers, executive teachers or counsellors (e.g., Evan and Alison); formation of differentiated learning groups to cater for those who were gifted or talented (e.g., Alison and Cate); frequent interaction with parents and preparedness to utilise a personal microphone to assist communication with a deaf student or a student with health needs (e.g., Cate and Alison); and changes in personal behaviour management strategies and self-expectations (e.g., Fiona and Graham).

Each teacher became aware of the difficulties of programming for individual students and all in some way felt that they had to compromise on professional ideals to manage their workload. Fiona, in reflecting on her workload in Interview 3, expressed her growing belief in the need for more teacher direction in her lessons even as she became more aware of the number of students in her class who needed individualised support. She explained:

I thought...the kids will all learn at the same rate...but that's one thing I've discovered is that they're all at different levels, you have to try and cater for those...all of them in some way as best you can and it gets frustrating because you can't (Fiona, Interview 3).

#### *Changes in Knowledge of Teacher–Student Relationships*

The third area of personal practical knowledge of teaching investigated was that of teacher–student relationships, an area which took into account the capacity which teachers had developed to sustain positive relationships with their students and to direct these relationships towards the enhancement of learning.

*Table 4.4 Summary of Case Study Data about Inclusive Practice*

Participant	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Alison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gifted and talented students</li> <li>• Remedial students</li> <li>• Individual students</li> <li>• Ability groups</li> </ul>	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiation of curriculum using Multiple Intelligences &amp; Bloom's Taxonomy</li> <li>• Literacy and numeracy adjustments in groups</li> <li>• Individual focus on children</li> </ul>
Bianca	Nil	Nil	Nil
Cate	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring different learning styles</li> <li>• Group/Individual</li> <li>• Quiet/noisy</li> </ul>	Nil
Dianne	Nil	Nil	Nil
Evan	Nil	Students' needs	Assessment – find out what the students know
Fiona	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuning in to children</li> <li>• Individuals</li> </ul>	Ability level
Graham	Nil	Nil	Nil
Helen			Students - background

*Survey Data about Teacher–Student Relationships*

Again, survey respondents were very confident in their knowledge gain in this area (see Table 4.5). Almost all respondents reported that their knowledge of managing student behaviour had increased despite the fact that 38 per cent of respondents also agreed that they had difficulties in managing student behaviour. The survey data suggested that behaviour management was not a high priority for professional development: only 11 per cent of the responses to an open-ended item in relation to preferred learning in the second year of teaching related to behaviour management. Although the issue remained a “difficulty” as reflected in responses to Item 13 in the survey, for a substantial number of respondents by November of the first year, it was of lesser priority in terms of perceived professional learning needs than others related more directly to curriculum and pedagogical content knowledge.

Table 4.5 *Gain in Knowledge of Teacher–Student Relationships*

Aspect of teacher–student relationships	Respondents who know more about teacher–student relationships	
	n	%
Managing student behaviour	235	98
Relating to students positively	229	95
Organising the classroom for learning	224	93
Engaging students in learning	224	93

*Case Study Data about Teacher–Student Relationships*

Table 4.6 presents an analysis of participants’ comments made in the construction of their concept maps in relation to each of the aspects of developing teacher–student relationships: relationships with students, classroom organisation and behaviour management. Table 4.6 shows that concept maps prepared by participants indicated an ongoing concern with each of these aspects over the course of the case study. The links that were made by individual participants reflected the ideals of the teachers,

the situations in which they were placed and the changes they made to their thinking in this area over time.

Relationships with students were a key concept at all stages; and the links between relationships, classroom organisation and behaviour management were acknowledged by all participants. Some teachers (e.g., Evan) were able to make links between relationships with students, classroom organisation and behaviour management as early as Phase 1; by the third phase, other teachers (with the exception of Bianca and Dianne) were indicating clear philosophical positions related to students and the positive relationship they wanted between teacher and students. By Phase 2, Cate was linking her relationship with her children to her knowledge of them and her use of the term “joy” to represent her third phase was a direct expression of the evident pleasure and confidence that was observable in all her classroom interactions with her children.

#### *Classroom organisation and classroom order*

Case study participants proceeded in their early teaching on the basis of familiar general pedagogical knowledge drawn from both theoretical and practical experiences in initial teacher education when establishing the tone or climate of their classrooms. In the first semester of teaching this knowledge was contracted by participants to that which could be immediately applied to their new classrooms. In practice, this was reduced to the physical organisation of the classroom, the establishment of rules and procedures, and the introduction of a range of behaviour management programs and techniques. All teachers, whether in cohesive or fragmented situations paid attention to these as needed and as opportunity arose in the first term of teaching.

In the early weeks of teaching, concern for students was related to the desire for teacher-imposed order in the teaching process and teachers organised the learning environment and the learning process to ensure that teaching could go on as planned, uninterrupted by student issues. In addition, there was overt control exercised on student behaviour by processes of classroom management which were again related to prior knowledge; these were the “tricks and tips” collected from practicum

teachers or from limited experience of observation of other teachers' classrooms gained as casual relief teachers.

For Fiona, order in the classroom was related specifically to the organisation she had imposed upon the teaching day, an order which she saw as necessary to her teaching in preventing the unanticipated. Observation of Fiona's first classroom revealed a very ordered environment, careful (and time-consuming) planning of resources needed for every lesson, and specific consideration given to scripted instructions to students at each stage of the day. As she moved into her second school and a much larger class in the second six months of her teaching, this had been somewhat relaxed and student participation in the organisation and distribution of resources and materials had been put in place, but her organisation of her day was still the meticulous process described below:

Lesson changes and getting an organization, making sure of little things...that they've already got the books in their desks, that you've got all the things you need, and ...just little organisational things (Fiona, Interview 2).

However, the unanticipated, for Helen, resulted in her questioning her own competence:

At the start...I was under-preparing all the time...and then other days when I'd plan everything and I'd be totally prepared and something would go hideously wrong with a child and I'd think, "What have I done?"...And I found when I really got into setting my program up properly, that helped a lot... (Helen, Interview 1).

In Alison's case, the need to teach classroom organisation and management routines to some extent inhibited and frustrated what she had seen as her primary role, which was to teach for knowledge, skills and content in academic areas. She reported:

I don't think uni ever prepares you for how almost the whole of Term 1 you're actually teaching children how to do activities, not just the content of the activity (Alison, Interview 2).

Both Helen and Evan saw good planning and good classroom organisation as a preventive activity, a process which provided a safeguard against the fear of behavioural disruption to the teaching process. Evan, with a wide range of different



positive reward systems being used within his classroom saw his behaviour management as directly linked to his classroom organisation:

I'm definitely working hard on classroom management to save myself with behaviour because I realise that if I've got a classroom that's organised and the kids can understand when to do this and when to do what, then I don't have to worry so much about that (Evan, Interview 1).

Student behaviour management was a primary concern to all teachers and participants addressed their own concerns in this area by intensive planning in an effort to prevent the emergence of behavioural issues. When there were ongoing and unresolved issues with classroom control, the effectiveness of teacher's preparation, their self-efficacy and self-esteem as teachers, and their commitment to and opportunity for continuing improvement in teaching were all reduced. Alison reported her own concerns with what other teachers thought of her teaching competency:

I'm also worried about other teachers...I walk past other teachers' classrooms and they're silent... and I'm going, oh no, they're going to think that I'm not a good teacher and I'm not a good disciplinarian because I cannot stop my kids [talking] there's just that undertone the whole time...and I said oh, you know, is that a bad thing or is that something that's going to come with practice? (Alison, Interview 1).

Where behaviour management issues did emerge, teachers had in place a range of management strategies and positive and negative rewards and reinforcers which they employed to restore equilibrium in the classroom.

Table 4.6 *Concept Maps: Concepts about Teacher–Student Relationships*

Participant	Phase 1			Phase 2			Phase 3		
	Relationships with students	Classroom organisation	Behaviour management	Relationships with students	Classroom organisation	Behaviour management	Relationships with students	Classroom organisation	Behaviour management
Alison	Nil	resources	social skills	Nil	classroom management	behaviour management	relationships – classroom contract	safe, supportive learning environment negotiated with students	behaviour management – aiming for student self-regulation)
Bianca	Nil	lack resources	students test limits	knowing the children; knowing what to expect of adult students	Nil	strategies – behaviour & attention with adults; behaviour & focusing with children; more knowledge of behaviour systems	Nil	Nil	Nil
Cate	caring; enthusiasm	time management in classroom	Nil	relationship with children; knowledge of them	Nil	Nil	joy; relationships	management	Nil

Table 4.6 *Concept Maps: Concepts about Teacher–Student Relationships (continued)*

Participant		Phase 1		Phase 2			Phase 3		
Dianne	Nil	classroom management	social skills; behaviour management	Nil	classroom management/ organisation	behaviour management	Nil	Nil	Nil
Evan	student / teacher communication	classroom management	behaviour management	care	Nil	management–positive	in class-communication with students	Nil	stay positive
Fiona	establish a caring environment; teacher- good relationships	structure; rules	children listening to you	caring classroom; teacher interaction; respect and listen	management	Nil	caring and student welfare; respect	efficient / organised	behaviour management: dealing; direct; distracts from core
Graham	relationships formed with students	classroom management)	Nil	relationships – formal; with students)	Nil	behaviour management	honesty with students; students' self-esteem; positive relationships; make an effort to know them	efficient classroom	behaviour management –be calm, be patient; working classroom
Helen							students' backgrounds	Nil	Nil

In describing his behaviour management processes, Graham linked them directly with the need for uninterrupted teaching as follows:

The central thing is teaching...I think the most important thing that comes with teaching is classroom management because I think without classroom management your classroom is not a learning environment... because it only takes one bad child to spoil the rest of the setting... (Graham, Interview 1).

Table 4.6 shows that most teachers made specific reference to behaviour management throughout the three phases of the project. There were three exceptions: Dianne went overseas at the conclusion of her first year of and thus was unavailable during Phase 3. Bianca made no reference to teacher–student relationships in her third phase, and explained that the lack of capacity to develop relationships was a source of grief by the second year of casual teaching (Bianca, personal communication, Interview 3). Only Cate consistently described her interactions with her students in terms of relationships: behaviour management was a very minor focus in her lessons and did not feature at all in her concept maps; she relied on enthusiastic and engaging teaching and learning, positive and encouraging interactions with all her students and efficient classroom organisation all of which were observable throughout her teaching day.

#### *Changes in knowledge of behaviour management*

*Menu-driven behaviour management.* At first, teachers made changes to their classroom behaviour management strategies or plans from a menu of acquired strategies, often without confidence that changes made would solve perceived problems. Alison described it as:

...trying out a lot of different strategies all the time depending on the kids who are involved ...some days things work and other days they don't (Alison, Interview 1).

In his first semester of teaching, Evan used at least three behaviour management strategies at any one time drawn from a personal menu of remembered strategies and changing frequently as children “tired” of one or other of his techniques. Evan’s techniques all involved the allocation of systems of positive rewards directed at

individual children or at groups of children and he found it ~~really~~ hard to keep all three systems going at one time as well as try and teach the class” (Evan, Interview 2). Changes were often made in the manner of trial and error responses, that is, in response to emerging dissonance arising from the mismatch between what was happening in the classroom and teachers’ perceptions of what should have been happening, drawn from personal beliefs, prior study and the experience of other teachers’ classrooms.

*Development of pedagogic reasoning in behaviour management.* There was a tendency initially for most case study participants to use a range of extrinsic behaviour management techniques, often requiring considerable time and energy on the part of the teacher to monitor and manage them. As the year progressed, and as teachers in ongoing and cohesive situations came to know their students, they tended to rely on fewer and less complex systems or strategies, intrinsic rewards or verbal praise and more on strategies directed specifically to the needs of particular students.

#### *Summary of Knowledge Gain in Personal Practical Knowledge*

Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and the interpretation of concept maps indicated it was the aspect of personal practical knowledge which initially took precedence over other domains of the knowledge base in teachers’ thinking. The acquisition of personal practical knowledge of teaching, that is, of those aspects of knowledge and teaching practice which related specifically to what was taught in the teacher’s own classroom and how it was taught, was at the forefront of teachers’ concerns as they set up their own or entered other teachers’ classrooms. The desire to establish themselves as teachers within their profession, their schools and their communities became a secondary consideration, one nonetheless dependent on the level of perceived success achieved in the classroom as teachers focused on their own ~~survival~~”.

In developing personal practical knowledge based on the knowledge of subject matter, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge gained in their pre-service courses (Shulman, 1986, 1987), teachers were required to integrate these three areas of practical knowledge to produce effective classroom

teaching practice: the capacity to manage the process of integration was a matter of considerable concern to all participants. Broader understandings of practical knowledge gained during pre-service education were subsumed under an apparent all-pervading need to bring a measure of structure and control to each successive teaching day through having created a program (of varying duration depending on the teaching situation) from those aspects of their pre-service education most directly related to day-to-day teaching. Matters such as differentiated pedagogy, understanding of subject matter knowledge beyond the confines of the grade-based syllabus, and considerations of student learning were temporarily put aside as urgent classroom organisation and management concerns prevailed.

### *Changes in Knowledge of the Context of Teaching*

Apart from the gains made in personal practical knowledge of teaching, teachers also made gains during the first two years of teaching in the remaining two domains of teacher knowledge—knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher. However, the initial overwhelming focus on personal practical knowledge meant that knowledge of context in the early months of teaching was acquired only as it was able to enhance practical knowledge and relieve some of the pressure teachers experienced within their classrooms. It was not until there had been some recognisable acquisition of personal practical knowledge and its concomitant level of acceptable feelings of personal agency that teachers were able to consider these two other domains of the knowledge base of teaching.

Knowledge of the context of teaching comprised a less accessible source of knowledge for beginning teachers. It was knowledge which became available to teachers through their often unplanned and informal interactions with other staff, with parents and with personnel outside the school through a range of professional development activities. When teachers were able to gain knowledge of the context in which they worked, especially at the school level, they were better able to seek out curriculum and teaching resources, become familiar with routines and procedures within the school, and draw on both the advice and support of colleagues in “finding their way” around a new environment and in dealing with the issues that arose. The knowledge gained in this domain reinforced and supported the knowledge gained in

the classroom. It was a primary source of self-belief as teachers consolidated their own professional identities in spite of the difficulties and doubts that all experienced at some time during the first year at the same time as others—students, colleagues and parents—acknowledged them as teachers.

### *Survey Data about Knowledge of Context*

Figure 5 shows the links between professional activity in a school and the development of knowledge of the context of teaching, developed from the responses to the survey.

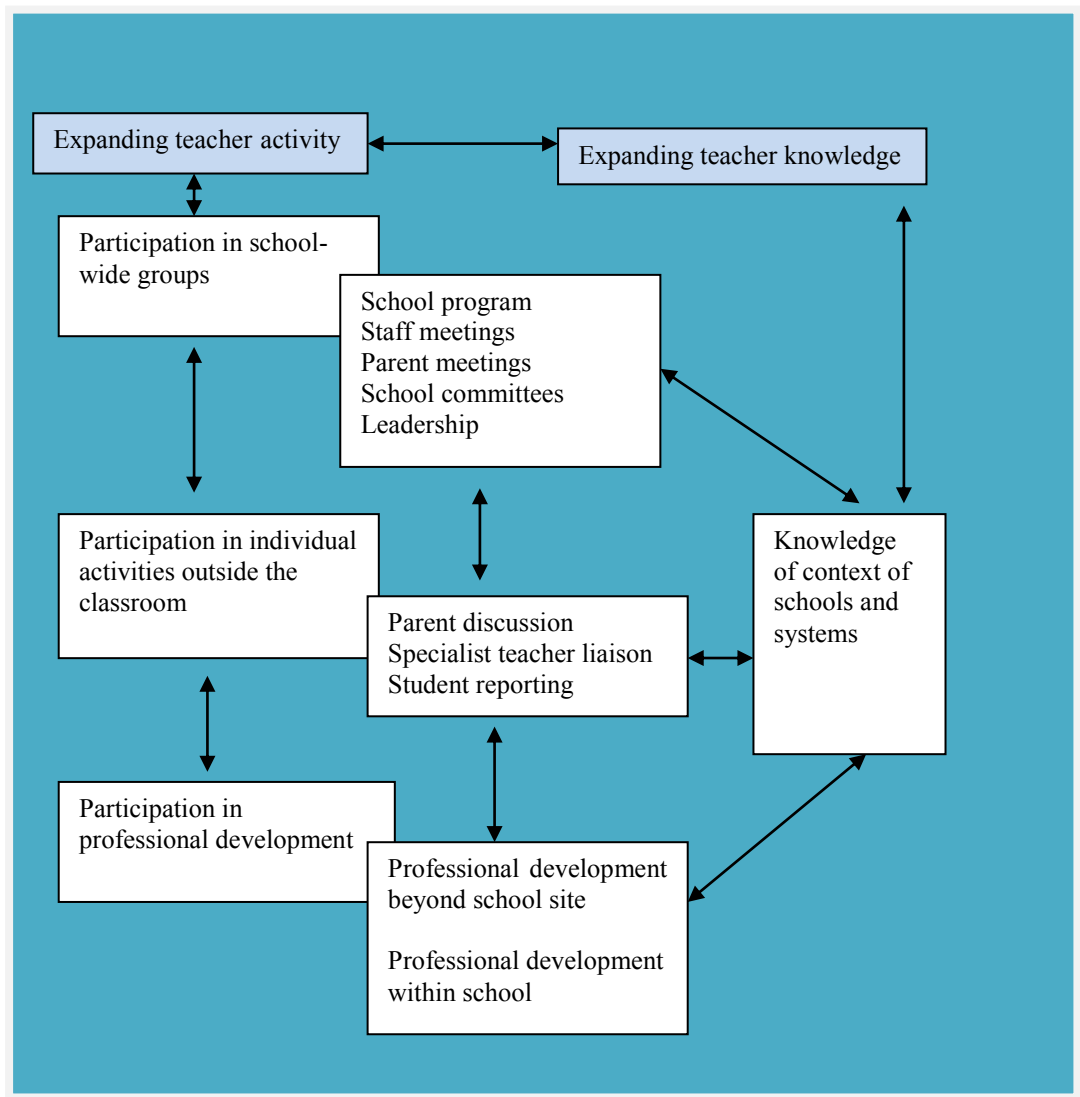


Figure 5. Construct of knowledge of the context of teaching

The survey-questionnaire asked respondents to indicate whether or not they had participated outside the classroom. More than 85 per cent of respondents had been encouraged to participate in individual activities outside their classroom (discussing student progress with parents, liaising with specialist staff and completing student reports). Over 80 per cent had attended some form of professional development. Over 70 per cent had accepted some form of responsibility for a school program and two-thirds of respondents had exercised some form of leadership during their first year and assisted other members of staff. Fewer respondents had had opportunity to attend formal meetings of parent organisations (41 per cent) and although 85 per cent reported attending staff meetings, only 64 per cent were members of a school committee. The overriding picture is one where teachers have been able to participate at some level in the broader school context in which they are teaching.

Survey respondents were able to identify those who had contributed to their development. Overwhelmingly, these were teachers at the same school who provided support, assisted teachers to improve their teaching and contributed actively to teachers' development.

#### *Case Study Data about Knowledge of Context*

Case study data indicated that participation in activities outside the classroom strengthened teachers' knowledge of the context, of its resources and of its personnel who acted as informal and formal mentors and sources of advice and support. As with survey respondents, case study participants' involvement in a teaching context developed not only knowledge of the programs, resources, relationships and interactions within the context but also knowledge within the other domains (personal practical knowledge of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher). The pre-service courses which case study participants had completed ensured that students were aware of "what our responsibilities are, not only in the classroom, but particularly how we can work within the school environment and the school as a whole as well" (Alison, Focus Group Interview). In addition, participants were acutely aware that teaching was more than participation in a classroom-bound occupation. For example, Bianca described her understanding thus:



...there's more to teaching than being in a classroom—there's everything that goes with it—the constantly furthering your education, the extra-curricular stuff and staff meetings...being a part of that whole school community (Bianca, Focus Group Interview).

*Mentor support and knowledge development*

Not all teachers participated in formalised mentoring programs. Evan, Helen and Alison had been allocated mentors by their respective schools and were being assisted through formal induction and accreditation programs as well as with day-to-day support and advice in relation to their classroom practice. Casual and temporary teachers reported some access to advice (e.g., Bianca, Graham Dianne and Fiona) where colleagues were willing, but these appeared to be at the initiative of the beginning teacher, rather than the school and to be highly contingent on the preparedness of the colleague to provide the advice or support needed at the time. Cate received considerable support as a casual teacher from her principal but was unable to access support in her second appointment, her permanent position.

*School-wide participation and knowledge development*

The longitudinal nature of the case study data provided a sobering nuance to the confidence of survey respondents who by the end of their first year could report quite substantial levels of participation in their schools. Case study participants were initially limited in the extent to which they were able or willing to participate in more than their own classroom partly for reasons of confidence, and partly for reasons of workload. It was not until well into the first year that some tentative steps were taken by some participants to become involved in school-wide activities or even to take part more actively in meetings with other staff. Evan was initially concerned that any comment in staff meetings would reveal his lack of knowledge. He reported:

I will generally sit there and I don't say much generally in most meetings....I don't want to say anything in case...just in case...it's sort of like, oh, you should have known that (Evan, Interview 1).

However, mid-way through Evan's second year at the school, he was far more aware of the micro-politics of the school and able to see his place in the staff and to manage relationships that had mostly, but not always, been positive and supportive. In

addition, he had begun to look beyond his own classroom to opportunities to offer his support to other staff in coordinating sporting programs and in organising a grade-wide excursion. By his third term in the school, he was sufficiently confident to present to a staff meeting his own compilation of a family-based homework program in Physical Education.

Alison referred to a similar issue of initial confusion about school-wide activities which impinged on her classroom as she tried to incorporate the school's activities into her own timetable and found that it was in a state of constant flux. She commented: ~~the~~ "the biggest thing that I've had to deal with is getting to know the school and the school processes..." (Interview 1). By the end of the year, she was heavily involved in the school's breakfast program, becoming involved in the school's ICT program as well as organising joint activities with other staff and excursions with other classes.

#### *Access to professional development and knowledge development*

Alison, Evan and Helen were offered formal professional development activities mostly in relation to their induction to their schools and to the overarching employing bodies. Graham was offered some assistance as he managed the transition from primary knowledge to secondary teaching. The remaining participants (Bianca, Cate, Dianne and Fiona) reported no participation in professional development throughout their first year of teaching.

#### *Changes in Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher*

Developing knowledge of self-as-teacher was a process that was essentially intermittent and subject to both great certainty when things were going well and immense uncertainty when multiple issues arose and were compounded by inexperience in prioritising or solving them. Survey respondents and case study participants alike commented on the sense of being overwhelmed, of ~~drowning~~ "drowning" and of being exceptionally tired and, in several cases, repeatedly ill. In many ways, resilience was a critical attribute if teachers were to ~~survive~~ "survive" this first year and continue in teaching.

*Survey Data about Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher*

The survey included items related to constructs of professional identity. These consisted of items related to (i) the reasons they had chosen teaching; (ii) the difficulties teachers met and the confidence with which they reported overcoming them; (iii) the processes by which they had improved their teaching and their self-identified areas for professional development in their second year; and (iv), their preferred career paths.

*Choosing to teach*

Survey respondents were invited to address the open-ended item: “Why did you become a teacher?” Respondents provided a total of 463 responses to this question (see Table 4.7) and responses reflected a range of beliefs about teaching, the role of the teacher and the personal decision of the respondent in choosing to become a teacher.

Table 4.7 *Survey Respondents: Reasons for Choosing Teaching as a Career*

Focus	Reasons	n	%
Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help children learn</li> <li>• Enjoy working with children</li> <li>• To make a difference to children</li> </ul>	231	50
Beliefs and values <i>re</i> teaching as a career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewarding /fulfilling/challenging career</li> <li>• To improve /give back to society</li> </ul>	76	16
Personal work or education experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal qualities or qualifications</li> <li>• Prior work experience</li> <li>• Own school experiences</li> <li>• Always wanted to be a teacher</li> <li>• Lifestyle choice</li> </ul>	153	33
No specific reason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sure why</li> </ul>	3	1
Total		463	100

*Perceptions of difficulties: Reality shock and survival*

Survey respondents, discussing the difficulties experienced during the first year of teaching, identified difficulties in surviving long hours, poor health and limited ~~down~~ time”; in establishing teaching timetables and programs; in getting to know how schools worked, the cycle of school activities and the location of resources; in relating to more experienced staff and seeking assistance; and in managing a wide range of student abilities, behavioural patterns and learning needs within their classes.

*Personal difficulties.* The first year of teaching was often one of making significant changes to personal lives and to understandings of teaching as a career. Beginning teachers through the open ended responses of the survey generally perceived their year as still one of ~~reality~~ shock.” They saw it as difficult, challenging, overwhelming, very stressful and very tiring. They used metaphors like ~~drowning~~”, ~~overwhelmed~~”, ~~a~~ hard year”, and, for many teachers, the depth of difficulty and the workload expectations were well beyond their expectations. They reported:

I was dead on my feet by Week 8 of Term 1 but have learned to pace myself during Term 2 and 3 (SR 040701).

I love this job and find it rewarding, challenging, exhausting and very pressurised (SR 280301).

It has been a hard year with an incredible amount of work (SR 290102).

Several reported health issues related to lack of sleep and stress:

It is so much work. First term I didn’t have a full night’s sleep as my mind was racing (emphasis in original) (SR 370103).

Many reported feeling as if they were drowning:

I do spend at last an extra 2 hours a day and weekends to program and catch up on assessments. I feel like I’m drowning or just treading water (SR 050201).

I honestly feel as if I’m drowning, having been thrown in the deep end (SR 060201).

Sometimes I feel out of my depth or just treading water at times (SR 100201).

Survey respondents also commented on the extent of the out-of-hours workload and many reported having no social life and severe impositions on their family life:

There are many after-work hours that need to be placed into paper-work and sometimes you find yourself tired and stressed from this overload of paper-work (SR 060101).

My biggest difficulty without a doubt is the enormous workload of the job! I have no life anymore!! Programming is never ending... (SR 120801).

John Howard once said –Teachers should work 9-5”. YES PLEASE – if only I worked 9-5 but that’s not the reality (emphasis in original) (SR 260601).

I am a little dismayed (to say the least!) at the amount of work I need to do at home for the job. I work every night after school and at least 4-5 hours each weekend. I’m tired! (emphasis in original) (SR 340704).

*Professional difficulties.* In responding to Question 13 of the survey respondents indicated their level of agreement with the statement: *During my first year I encountered difficulties in this area...* The survey listed fourteen possible areas of difficulties and respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the above statement.

Table 4.8 shows the range of professional difficulties reported by teachers at the end of the first year of teaching. These were primarily in developing practical knowledge of teaching; fewer teachers reported difficulties in accessing support and some reported difficulties in personal areas related to their work as teachers. Table 4.8 presents the number of teachers (from a total of 241) and the corresponding percentage of the total cohort who experienced difficulties in each of the given areas.

Table 4.8 *Difficulties Reported in the First Year of Teaching*

Difficulties	Total Respondents	
	n	%
Engagement in the practice of teaching		
Programming & planning for all students	107	44
Assessing student learning	103	43
Reporting to parents	79	33
Classroom organisation	53	22
Knowing students	28	12
Gaining student respect	62	26
Managing student behaviour	92	38
Professional socialisation		
Gaining support from other teachers	37	15
Gaining support from supervisors	36	15
Gaining support from school executive staff	28	12
Gaining support from the principal	24	10
Professional identity		
Having a predictable daily routine	64	27
Financial insecurity	67	28

*Improving teaching and professional development priorities*

During the first year of teaching, participants reported using both collegial and private means of improving their teaching. They sought assistance from other members of the school staff or from other teachers, attended professional development activities and engaged in critical reflection and professional reading.

Teachers' priorities in professional development in their second year were sought through an open response item (*Q15: In my second year I would like to learn...*) to which teachers gave multiple responses. Table 4.9 presents the 420 responses given by the total of 232 teachers who responded to the item (96 per cent of the respondents).

Table 4.9 *Self-identified Areas for Future Professional Development*

Area for professional development	Responses	
	n	%
Syllabus, outcomes & programming	68	16
General teaching skills	68	16
Assessment, recording and reporting techniques	65	15
Catering for students with special needs	52	12
Behaviour management	45	11
Catering for a range of ability levels	35	8
Time management	30	7
Whole school organisation	22	5
Classroom organisation	16	4
ICT	5	1
Communication with parents	4	1
Professional development	4	1
Social and home issues that affect learning	3	1
Concerns with employment	3	1
Total	420	99

Survey respondents were able to identify both difficulties and potential solutions through professional learning in their second year. Table 4.10 demonstrates the close links which were evident between the difficulties reported by survey respondents and the topics which they identified as areas for learning in their second year of teaching.

Table 4.10 *Comparing Reported Difficulties and Development Plans*

Identified difficulties to be addressed	Future professional development area
Programming & planning for all students	Syllabus, outcomes & programming
Classroom organisation	General teaching skills
Assessing	Assessment, recording and reporting techniques
Programming & planning for all students	Catering for students with special needs
Behaviour management	Behaviour management
Programming & planning for all students	Catering for a range of ability levels
Classroom organisation	Time management
Gaining support	Whole school organisation
Classroom organisation	Classroom organisation
Classroom organisation	ICT
Reporting	Communication with parents
Access to professional development	Professional development
Knowing students	Social and home issues that affect learning
Financial insecurity	Concerns with employment

*Personal career direction*

One-third of survey respondents were casual relief teachers; yet 92 per cent of all survey respondents, in both permanent and casual position when asked about their preferences for their second year, nominated a permanent position teaching their own class and the remainder, a class of their own in a temporary position as their highest priority. Some teachers had intentions other than continuing teaching in NSW: 20 per cent indicated they may leave teaching for other careers or study and 17 per cent intended going overseas in the following year (see Table 4.11).



Table 4.11 *Survey Respondents' Career Preferences (Multiple Responses)*

Career preference in second year	%
Permanent, class-based	92
Permanent, any position	59
Temporary, long block, class-based	44
Temporary, long block, any position	34
Casual relief	13
Career outside teaching	8
Teaching overseas	17
Return to study	12
Other	10

*Case Study Data about Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher*

Case study participants' reasons for going into primary teaching were varied but similar to those offered by survey respondents. (compare Table 4.12 and Table 4.7). For some, it was a long-standing aspiration; for others a means to other career ends.

Table 4.12 *Case Study Participants: Choosing Teaching as a Career*

Case study participant	Reasons
Alison	Prior employment experience in training others; career change marketability; capacity to engage in social justice-based profession
Bianca	Desire to work in early childhood from high school age; positive experiences at school; family influence of young children
Cate	Desire to emulate high school teachers;
Dianne	Positive experience at primary school
Evan	University degree achieved: identity formation in early career rather than before
Fiona	Interest in young children from early childhood; career change; social responsibility focus; interest in training others
Graham	To be the teacher his own were not; lifestyle positives
Helen	Need to make a difference in a profession which engaged creativity

*Perceptions of difficulties: Reality shock and survival*

*Personal difficulties.* In the initial stage of teaching, that is, within the first six months, all case study participants were concerned with the workload, the demands on their time, their health and their personal lives, and with their ability to do the job to their own, their colleagues' and their supervisors' satisfaction.

Cate, for example, reported her own condition six weeks after beginning teaching:

I'm buggered... .. totally buggered. No, I'm exhausted and with the excitement of the new job, I've got no sleep this week and I think when you first start, just to get used to the pace of school life as opposed to uni life...it's a lot different... at uni if you're tired you just turn the alarm off and go back to sleep (laughter) or that's what I did anyway... but yeah, but it's grown.. I'm getting more used to it but I'm ... yeah, I am tired (Cate, Initial interview, emphasis in spoken original).

There was also the excitement many felt about having embarked on their professional journey. Fiona reported the amount of preparation she was doing (until very late each night) for her first teaching job:

Usually I have these great ideas at about eleven o'clock at night, and I think about it constantly...oh, not every minute of the day but, you know, if I'm washing up, having a shower,...doing anything like that...this is what I think about...how could I teach that? What could I do? How would that work? I think about it a lot...and I love it...I love trying to figure out how to do something and make it fun (Fiona, Interview 2).

*Professional difficulties.* Through the interviews and associated data collection methods, it became clear that there was a significant overlap between the personal and the professional difficulties experienced by case study participants. Although there were few doubts as to the wisdom of becoming a teacher, there were concerns felt by all teachers as to whether they would be able to remain in teaching. Professional identities at this stage were fragile and dependent on the situations teachers met within their schools.

In Term 1, Alison was concerned that her –setting up” was impeding both her teaching and her students' learning. She observed:

...so I'm not expecting to get through much this term. However, I'm hoping Term 2 and Term 3 and Term 4 will be the [terms] when I really get more done and I think that's one of my greatest worries ...sort of saying look, they're not learning anything, what am I doing? Any moment now someone's going to come and knock on my door and say "you're not a real teacher, what are you doing?" (Alison, Interview 1).

Difficulties with students, with other staff, with the employment situation, with changes in personal circumstances, and with the workload all led to some self-questioning. By the end of the first year, two teachers – Dianne and Bianca – had expressed grave doubts about continuing in teaching. Difficulties with the staff of her school had led to Cate's considering leaving school by the middle of her first year, and by the end of the first term, Alison was reacting to the workload, considering what she had given up personally in order to take up her position, and making a conscious decision to keep going.

For most of the case study participants, the experience of entering the teaching profession had allowed them to gain insight into themselves. Bianca recognised in herself during the first six months of the year a growing confidence to tackle new situations, interact with new groups of people and cope with the uncertainties from a background of being a person who liked to know in advance what she was doing. Bianca measured her growing confidence in terms of a lessening of the physical illness that had previously beset her on entering each new school.

I felt so sick...I'd be awake all night...I felt like throwing up and I had butterflies and wouldn't sleep ...I'd be so tired...because I'm one of these people...I panic that I won't be accepted or that the children won't feel comfortable with me....I mean....I'm not hard to get along with by any means but I didn't want to be the kind of person that they wouldn't want back... (Bianca, Interview 2).

Dianne, in struggling to come to terms with her own (negative) feelings about teaching, described herself as a "perfectionist" and recognised that she was unlikely to be able to meet her own expectations of herself with so much curriculum content and pedagogy to learn. Alison, quite open about the fact that her decision to enter teaching was entirely instrumental (the need to "get a degree"), had developed her understanding of social justice into a sense of personal inadequacy that she struggled

to come to terms with; “I think I’m feeling a lot of guilt at the moment that I don’t feel as though I’m doing enough” (Alison, Interview 1) even though she acknowledged that she did not “have time for anything else” other than her classroom teaching. By the end of the first year, as Cate continued in her second school, she described herself as more settled, commenting on the resolution of issues related to moving out of home and noting that this resolution contributed to the improvement of her situation at school.

### *Personal career direction*

In the early weeks of teaching, in contrast to the last weeks of university study, participants were far more cautious about committing themselves to any long term career in teaching. Where teachers experienced a successful first year, and particularly where they had the prospect of full-time, class-based and permanent work in the second year (e.g., Alison, Helen, Evan and Cate), their career plans were more open-ended: success in their first year was reflected in enthusiasm for the second year and preparedness to see classroom teaching as a longer-term career. Those who had had less success were far more tentative about their commitment and were changing their situations at the end of the first year (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 *Career Situations in Second Year of Teaching*

Participant	Career destination in second year
Alison	Same school (and same grade)
Bianca	Continued availability for casual work; continued work in other industries
Cate	Same school (and same grade)
Dianne	Overseas (not necessarily to teaching)
Evan	Same school (and same grade)
Fiona	Casual teaching
Graham	Overseas (secondary teaching position)
Helen	Same school (and same grade)

*Summary of Chapter 4*

This chapter has presented the results of research which addressed the first research question, namely, the reported changes in teacher knowledge in early career. The chapter has detailed the results of both the survey-questionnaire and the case study in relation to the domains of personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching, and knowledge of self-as-teacher. This chapter has indicated that substantial knowledge gain occurred, but that this was primarily in the area of personal practical knowledge. Knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher were at times contingent on the capacity of teachers to identify for themselves the progress they had made in developing personal practical knowledge of teaching.

The following chapter will address the second research question and consider the personal and professional factors which may have contributed to differentiated experiences of beginning teaching. Both survey respondents and case study participants reported knowledge gains during the first two years of teaching; however, the gain was not consistent amongst respondents or amongst case study participants. The data suggest that differences in the experiences which formed the context for knowledge gain may have been related to differences in both personal attributes and professional circumstances and this discussion will form the content of the next chapter.

## Chapter 5 Results: Research Question 2

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of research which addressed Research Question 2, namely:

What personal and professional factors may have contributed to differences in teachers' experience of beginning teaching?

In addressing this question, the quantitative and qualitative data from the survey were used as the primary source of information and results were compared with the information obtained through the case study methods, that is, through interviews, teacher reflection on digital images and researcher observation of classroom events and artefacts. The chapter is organised according to the professional activities which facilitated the development of the domains of teacher knowledge addressed in chapter 4, that is, engagement in the practice of teaching, participation in professional socialisation and negotiation of professional identity.

In the data analysis on which this chapter is based, bivariate descriptive statistical tests of quantitative data drawn from the survey-questionnaire were used to compare the results of groups of teachers according to identified sets of personal attributes and professional circumstances. Where statistically significant differences between groups were identified, the results have been tabulated and discussed in terms of the possibility that these differences in personal and professional factors, that is, in personal attributes and/or professional circumstances may contribute to differentiated experience and professional learning during the first year of teaching.

Case study data were examined in regard to the same professional activities. This enabled identification from cross-case analysis of similarities to and differences from the reported experience of survey respondents in terms of the effect of particular personal and professional circumstances on the experience and learning of case study participants.

*Personal Attributes and Professional Circumstances*

Data from the survey were used to explore a number of variations in the experiences of beginning teachers and to consider the extent to which these variations could be attributed to differences in personal attributes or professional circumstances. Beginning teachers responding to the survey or participating in the case study were not a homogeneous group and were differentiated by personal attributes such as gender, age, level and location of pre-service education and prior workforce participation. In addition, their employment status (permanent or casual appointments); the rural, regional or metropolitan location of the schools in which they were employed; whether they worked in one or several schools; and their opportunity to work for significant periods of time on their “own” class all provided further areas of professional differentiation amongst a group that is often considered homogeneous. The variety of personal and professional experience of teachers contributed to a range of levels of development of teacher knowledge in the first year of teaching and the differences that emerged could be attributed in some cases to personal attributes and, more often, to a range of professional circumstances (see Table 3.1).

*Measuring Personal and Professional Differences*

The limitations of methodology (specifically the use of an opportunity sample and attitude scales resulting in the decision to use non-parametric tests) precluded the use of statistical regression processes which may have been useful in identifying the relative importance of specific attributes or circumstances in contributing to difference in experience and knowledge gain (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2008, pp. 367-369). Given these limitations, the results have been described in terms of differences between two sub-groups within each of the above eight categories of difference. It has not been possible to determine unequivocally that one factor is not of overriding importance, nor has it been the intention to identify any one personal or professional factor as a causal factor in differentiated experience. The results remain descriptive. However, even within these limitations, it has been possible to compare the levels of difference in experience between two groups of teachers within each category of personal attribute or professional circumstance and from such description, to identify

those factors which may have contributed to differentiated experience and learning and which in future may suggest areas for further research.

Since difference in experience may be the result of differences in personal attributes, professional circumstances or a combination of both, the survey was designed to seek information related to both personal attributes and professional circumstances (see Table 3.1). These data were drawn from the demographic data requested in the survey-questionnaire, recoded to two categories for each variable in order to facilitate exploration through bivariate statistical testing such as the use of crosstabs and chi-square (Pallant, 2005, pp. 288-291).

### *Testing for Statistically Significant Differences*

Differences in personal attributes and professional circumstances of survey respondents were explored through the use of descriptive statistical tests for chi-square where one or both variables were categorical or where variables were considered continuous using a Likert five-point scale (Burns, 2000; Pallant, 2005).

### *Engaging in the Practice of Teaching*

This activity was addressed in the survey by items which related expressly to perceived gains in knowledge about a range of contributing activities. Using factor analysis, items related to perceived gains in personal practical knowledge of teaching were clustered in three categories according to the activities which contributed to the acquisition of practical knowledge: planning for teaching; inclusive practice in teaching; and the development of positive teacher–student relationships.

### *Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Planning for Teaching*

In considering respondents' experience of planning for teaching, statistically significant differences in knowledge gain arose largely from differences in personal attributes: age, gender, prior work experience and level of qualifications. Teachers' professional circumstances appeared to have no statistically significant effect on their reported personal gain in knowledge of planning for teaching. The most frequently occurring difference in relation to knowledge of planning was that occasioned by



gender; male teachers, who comprised 13 per cent of the respondents, reported less gain in knowledge of the syllabus, in their capacity for effective lesson planning and lesson timing and their understanding of assessment of student learning. In addition, they were less positive about their gain in knowledge of ways to improve their teaching (see Table 5.1).

Other than gender, age and prior work experience also were related to difference in perceptions of knowledge gained about planning. Older beginning teachers, who comprised 33 per cent of respondents, and those with prior work experience (55 per cent of respondents) were less positive about their gain in knowledge of ways to evaluate their own teaching and ways to improve it than were those who were younger and had less workforce participation prior to entering university (see Table 5.1).

#### *Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Difficulties in Planning*

Teachers were asked to rate difficulties they had experienced in their first year. In relation to planning for teaching, no difficulties were related to personal attributes. However, professional circumstances appeared to result in some statistically significant differences in perception of difficulties in this area. Location was weakly related to difficulties in programming (teachers in metropolitan schools having more difficulty than those in rural schools) and difficulties in assessing were similarly weakly related to class-based experience, with those who had limited experience of teaching their own class experiencing more difficulty than those who had mostly ongoing class-based experience (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.1 *Significant Differences: Knowledge of Planning for Teaching*

Attribute or circumstance	Planning for teaching Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)						
	Programming	Syllabus Knowledge	Lesson plans	Lesson timing	Assessing learning	Evaluating teaching	Improving teaching
Age	7.95*	1.73	7.06	2.80	5.30	11.16**	4.91
Gender	2.17	11.54**	10.75**	13.02**	8.42**	3.83	7.19*
Prior work experience	4.53	2.76	0.28	5.12	3.80	11.47**	2.01
Qualifications	0.52	6.95	12.44***	1.80	0.99	11.88	3.54
Location	3.21	3.24	1.29	6.07	1.70	3.58	2.88
Employment status	2.47	6.95	3.61	2.99	1.54	3.30	0.80
No. of schools	3.32	1.00	3.09	2.03	3.96	1.54	4.48
Class experience	0.58	1.65	6.10	0.78	1.21	1.93	0.70

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

Table 5.2 *Significant Differences: Reported Difficulties in Planning*

Attribute or circumstance	Difficulties in planning for teaching Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)			
	Programming for all	Assessing learning	Student reports	Organising classroom
Age	2.33	3.96	5.54	3.97
Gender	3.22	3.36	0.88	6.69
Prior work experience	2.62	2.06	2.61	1.75
Qualifications	3.19	1.06	0.50	6.82
Location	8.51*	5.91	9.74**	3.66
Employment status	3.16	1.94	9.55**	3.45
No. of schools	2.61	3.39	10.82**	3.21
Class experience	3.62	7.84*	7.72*	5.38

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

#### *Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Inclusive Practice*

There was a greater level of agreement with the statement that there had been a gain in knowledge of inclusive practice in teaching from those who were in cohesive employment situations in continuing, single school and class-based positions than from those in uncertain, fragmented and casual employment (see Table 5.3). Responses to the second element of practical knowledge, that of knowledge of inclusive practice in teaching (teaching students with disabilities or learning difficulties, or those who were identified as gifted and talented), revealed that although the personal attribute of gender was again a factor, with male teachers less confident than their female counterparts in managing students with disabilities, there were significant differences arising also from the professional circumstance of location: teachers in rural schools were less positive about their gain in knowledge of teaching gifted and talented students than were those located in metropolitan schools (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 *Significant Differences: Knowledge of Inclusive Practice*

Attribute or circumstance	Inclusive practice Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)		
	Students with disabilities	Students with learning difficulties	Gifted &/or talented students
Age	5.72	3.25	5.93
Gender	9.53**	2.92	1.89
Prior work experience	6.70	1.67	4.64
Qualifications	1.58	5.18	7.58
Location	5.26	6.06	11.59**
Employment status	5.53	2.14	5.40
No. of schools	3.37	3.76	6.54
Class experience	5.24	5.51	1.09

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

#### *Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Teacher–Student Relationships*

The third component of practical knowledge was summarised as knowledge of teacher–student relationships and comprised items related to engaging students in learning, managing student behaviour, organising the classroom for learning and relating to students positively. Of these, only gender had any significant effect with male teachers significantly less confident of their gain in knowledge about how to engage students in learning than were female teachers (see Table 5.4). There was, however, a distinction between teachers working in cohesive situations and those in fragmented circumstances. In each of the components of this aspect of practical knowledge, approximately 60 per cent of those who agreed that they had gained in knowledge were in class-based positions, compared to 40 per cent who had not taught their own class.

Table 5.4 *Significant Differences: Teacher–Student Relationships*

Attribute or circumstance	Teacher–student relationships Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)			
	Managing student behaviour	Relating to students positively	Organising the classroom for learning	Engaging students in learning
Age	0.96	1.39	8.68**	4.41
Gender	0.95	3.21	3.84	16.04***
Prior work experience	0.91	3.05	5.94	3.51
Qualifications	1.97	7.13	1.15	3.73
Location	2.27	3.83	1.41	2.00
Employment status	3.47	3.20	2.64	3.86
No. of schools	3.08	4.93	4.16	1.59
Class experience	2.35	4.05	2.75	3.48

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

#### *Personal Attributes, Professional Circumstances and Difficulties with Students*

When considering the cluster of responses relating to difficulties with students (gaining student respect, knowing students, managing student discipline and relating to parents) differences in gender, prior work experience and qualifications all had some effect on different responses to difficulties with students (see Table 5.5). Male teachers reported significantly more difficulty in relating to parents than did female teachers; teachers with prior work experience reported greater difficulty in gaining student respect than those with no prior work experience; and those with initial teaching qualifications reported greater concerns with student discipline than those with postgraduate qualifications.

A number of professional circumstances also contributed to significant differences in the difficulties teachers experienced with students: these included location, and the extent of a teacher's experience of managing their own class. Metropolitan teachers reported greater difficulty gaining student respect, greater difficulty managing student discipline and greater concern in relating to parents than did rural teachers. Those who had limited or no continuing class-based teaching reported greater

difficulty in getting to know students and in relating to parents when compared with those who worked mostly with their own class (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 *Significant Differences: Reported Difficulties with Students*

Attribute or circumstance	Difficulties with students Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)			
	Student respect	Knowing students	Student discipline	Parents
Age	6.30	5.12	5.72	6.61
Gender	2.27	3.81	2.86	11.16**
Prior work experience	8.21*	2.32	1.97	3.69
Qualifications	1.41	3.77	10.64**	3.32
Location	8.13*	6.91	16.74***	8.46*
Employment status	3.51	4.74	5.65	5.90
No. of schools	2.42	7.41	6.97	7.31
Class experience	3.12	7.91*	3.68	8.65*

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

*Summary: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Personal and Professional Factors*

Table 5.6 and Table 5.7 summarise the effect of personal and professional factors on teachers' reported acquisition of personal practical knowledge of teaching and the difficulties they experienced in engaging in teaching practice. The data obtained in the survey suggest that the differentiated level of gain which teachers reported in their practical knowledge of teaching is related mostly to personal attributes, especially gender, and only one professional circumstance—location—appears to have a significant bearing on gain in any aspect of personal practical knowledge. Professional circumstances appear to have had a greater effect on the difficulties reported by respondents.

Table 5.6 *Personal and Professional Factors and Teaching Practice*

	Planning for teaching	Inclusive practice	Teacher–student relationships
Personal attributes			
Age (Under or over 25 years)	Older teachers were less positive about their gain in knowledge of programming and of evaluating teaching	No significant difference	Older teachers were less positive about their gain in knowledge of classroom organisation
Gender (Male or female)	Male teachers were less positive about their gain in knowledge of the syllabus, lesson planning, lesson timing, assessing learning and improving teaching	Male teachers were less positive about their gain in knowledge of teaching students with disabilities	Male teachers were less positive about their gain in knowledge of ways to engage students in learning
Prior work experience (Career change entrant to teacher education or school leaver)	Career change entrants were less positive about their gain in knowledge of evaluating teaching	No significant difference	No significant difference
Qualifications (Graduate or post-graduate qualifications)	Teachers with post-graduate qualifications were less positive about their gain in knowledge of lesson planning and evaluating teaching	No significant difference	No significant difference

Table 5.6 *Personal and Professional Factors and Teaching Practice (continued)*

	Planning for teaching	Inclusive practice	Teacher–student relationships
Professional circumstances			
Location (Metropolitan and or rural schools)	No significant difference	Teachers in metropolitan schools were less positive about their gain in knowledge about teaching gifted and talented students	No significant difference
Employment status (Casual or permanent status)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
No. of schools (One school or more than one school)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
Class experience (Continuing class-based teaching on one class or fragmented teaching of several or many classes)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference



Table 5.7 *Reported Difficulties in Teaching Practice*

Personal attributes	Planning for teaching			Teacher–student relationships		
	Difficulties with inclusive programming	Difficulties with assessing	Difficulties with reporting	Difficulties in gaining student respect	Difficulties with student discipline	Difficulties with knowing students
Age (under or over 25 years of age)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
Gender (male or female)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
Prior work experience (Career change entrant to teacher education or school leaver)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	Career change entrants reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference	No significant difference
Qualifications (Graduate or post-graduate qualifications)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant differences	Teachers with graduate qualifications reported greater level of difficulty	No significant differences

Table 5.7 *Reported Difficulties in Teaching Practice (continued)*

Professional circumstances	Planning for teaching			Teacher–student relationships		
	Difficulties with inclusive programming	Difficulties with assessing	Difficulties with reporting	Difficulties in gaining student respect	Difficulties with student discipline	Difficulties with knowing students
Location (Metropolitan and or rural schools)	Teachers in metropolitan schools reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference	Teachers in metropolitan schools reported greater level of difficulty	Teachers in metropolitan schools reported greater level of difficulty	Teachers in metropolitan schools reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference
Employment status (Casual or permanent status)	No significant difference	No significant difference	Teachers in permanent positions reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
No. of schools (One school or more than one school)	No significant difference	No significant difference	Teachers who taught in more than one school reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
Class experience (Continuing class-based teaching on one class or fragmented teaching of several or many classes)	No significant difference	Teachers in fragmented teaching situations reported greater level of difficulty	Teachers in fragmented teaching situations reported greater level of difficulty	No significant difference	No significant difference	Teachers in fragmented teaching situations reported greater level of difficulty

*Participation in Professional Socialisation*

The experience of professional socialisation and the process of acquisition of knowledge about the context of teaching were explored through items which required respondents to consider the roles they were able to play in school communities through group and individual participation in school-wide activities, and the access they had to support from mentors within the school and the profession. Items related to participation in professional socialisation were clustered through factor analysis into several aspects: participation in school-wide group activities, for example, staff and other meetings; participation in individual activities beyond the classroom such as liaison with specialist personnel; and participation in professional development activities provided by both the school and outside agencies. In addition, respondents were asked to identify those from within the school and those outside the school who had provided support and who had thereby contributed to their professional development.

*Opportunity for Participation in School-wide Groups**Personal attributes*

Only one personal attribute—age—resulted in any statistically significant variation in relation to group socialisation opportunities, that is, in teachers' capacity to participate in parent meetings, to take part in school committees, to accept responsibility for a school program and to exercise capacity for leadership. One-third of respondents were over 25 years of age and of these teachers, only a quarter reported that they had been encouraged to attend parent organisation meetings and take part in a school committee while one-third of their younger colleagues were more positive about their attendance at such meetings.

*Professional circumstances*

Professional circumstances, rather than personal attributes, were related to a number of other significant variations in teachers' group socialisation opportunities. These circumstances included the location of schools and the extent of teachers' continuing class-based experience during the year. The location of schools had a significant

effect on teachers' attendance at parent organisation meetings and also on the capacity to exercise leadership within schools. Thirty-eight per cent of respondent beginning teachers were located in rural or regional schools; the remainder (62 per cent) were based in schools in the metropolitan districts in and around Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. Those based in metropolitan schools reported significantly less opportunity to participate in group-based activities and to exercise leadership than those in rural schools.

At the time of the survey (at the end of teachers' first year of teaching), 40 percent of respondents had had limited or no experience in managing a class of their own. The extent of their ongoing class-based experience was also related (to a highly significant extent) to the degree to which teachers had participated in school-wide group programs or joined in school committees: those who had responsibility for their own class also had significantly more experience in school-wide group participation (see Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 *Significant Differences: Opportunity for School Group Participation*

Attribute or circumstance	School Group Participation Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)				
	School program	Staff meetings	Parent meetings	School committees	Leadership
Age	4.01	4.36	10.78**	8.88*	2.36
Gender	5.96	5.45	3.98	4.75	3.92
Prior work experience	2.68	5.86	5.48	5.10	5.16
Qualifications	7.60	3.69	1.53	5.90	6.90
Location	1.51	6.83	9.39**	1.46	7.87*
Employment status	4.29	3.33	5.41	6.73	1.74
Schools	7.02	0.47	4.50	5.31	1.96
Class experience	12.56***	3.45	4.14	13.29***	4.80

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

*Opportunity for Individual Participation in School-wide Activities*

This cluster of responses considered the extent to which teachers reported that they were able to make individual choices and exercise individual responsibility in participating outside their own classroom. It involved teachers' experience in liaising with specialist staff, such as school counsellors; their opportunity to engage in discussion with parents; and their experience in the preparation of student reports for parents, an activity which frequently required collaborative activity linking teachers to other teachers, to staff of the senior management team and to an on-site induction into the required processes and procedures for the completion of the school's student reports.

Preparing student reports constituted an individual activity in which only one personal attribute (age) resulted in any significant difference, with those over 25 years of age reporting less opportunity to participate in student reporting. However, the opportunity to prepare student reports was affected by two professional circumstances: (i) the number of schools teachers had worked in and (ii) the extent of continuing class-based experience. When asked to identify their role in reporting, teachers who had worked in more than one school and those who had had limited continuing class-based experience reported less encouragement to be engaged in student reporting.

Reporting of student progress was perceived as significantly more difficult by those who were employed in cohesive, class-based and single school positions. These were the teachers whose positions required close attention to assessment and reporting in preparation for reporting to parents at the end of Term 2 and Term 4; for those in fragmented positions, the question of contributing to student reports rarely arose. Again, the fragmentation of employment experience resulted in a large group of teachers who had limited opportunity to participate in a process that even their colleagues who were permanent teachers working on their own class within one school, acknowledged as difficult (see Table 5.9).

Other than preparing student reports, discussion with parents constituted the only other individual activity significantly affected by professional circumstances with

those employed on a casual basis significantly limited in their level of participation in such discussions. Although they did not report any significant differences in opportunity to meet with parents, teachers in fragmented teaching situations and male teachers reported greater levels of difficulty in relating to parents.

Table 5.9 *Significant Differences: Opportunity for Individual Participation*

Attribute or circumstance	Individual Participation Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)		
	Parent discussion	Specialist liaison	Student reporting
Age	1.17	5.63	8.37*
Gender	3.72	5.61	3.31
Prior work experience	7.15	2.51	3.64
Qualifications	1.82	1.84	2.09
Location	1.53	4.46	6.32
Employment status	9.06**	4.33	5.24
No. of schools	1.72	1.47	14.03***
Class experience	16.69***	6.29	24.47***

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

#### *Opportunity for Professional Support by Mentors*

Effective professional socialisation relies heavily on the presence in the workplace of more experienced colleagues able and willing to induct beginners into the culture of the school. Survey respondents were invited to rate on a Likert scale the degree of assistance provided by mentors such as teachers and staff of the senior management team of the school in which they worked; consultants from the employing authority; teachers who were located in other schools or those who provided support from a basis of friendship or family membership (see Table 5.10).

The personal attributes of age and qualifications were contributors to significant differences in perceptions of mentor support. Those over 25 years of age were less positive than those in the younger age bracket about the contribution to their development made by senior staff but significantly more positive about the contribution made by consultants. The small number of teachers with postgraduate

qualifications (that is, with more than four years pre-service education) were significantly less positive about the contribution made by teachers from within the school than were their less academically qualified colleagues.

There were some statistically significant differences in the reported contribution of mentors as a result of professional circumstances. Teachers employed in more than one school were more positive about the contribution to their own development provided by the informal network of teachers in other schools (rather than in their own school) than were their colleagues in continuing positions in one school.

Those who had responsibility for their own class were more positive about the contribution of consultants to their development than were those in fragmented teaching positions. Those with mostly ongoing and continuing class-based experience had significantly more opportunity to benefit from working with consultants who were employed by the system than did those who had little or no ongoing class-based experience.

Of the survey respondents who commented in open-ended response on the support offered, most were very aware of their reliance on their supervisors and other staff for assistance. Many of those working in small schools commented on a lack of specific support and direction; those who did receive support regarded themselves as “lucky”. Comments such as the following were typical of those who were positive:

I have found the staff to be extremely supportive and I feel extremely lucky as the teachers I work with in my stage are so willing to try new things and always inspire me to always adapt my teaching to best benefit my students (SR050501).

Of those who were critical of the support provided by their school or system, many commented generally on the need for “more support for beginning teachers” (SR 270601).

Table 5.10 *Significant Differences: Access to Mentors*

Attribute or circumstance	Mentors Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)				
	Mentors within school		Mentors outside school		
	Teachers (Own school)	Executive staff	Consultants	Teachers (Other schools)	Teachers (Friends/family)
Age	1.07	7.78*	10.14**	5.11	1.19
Gender	2.48	2.20	3.03	2.65	0.47
Prior work experience	0.82	3.59	4.11	1.46	2.71
Qualifications	17.19***	2.30	4.88	6.08	3.62
Location	4.08	1.85	2.68	5.02	2.68
Employment status	2.55	6.68	7.05	3.23	3.47
Schools	1.46	4.31	1.52	9.09*	2.82
Class experience	1.40	2.66	10.60**	3.58	9.08

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

### *Difficulties in Accessing Support*

Differences in personal attributes and professional circumstance had little effect on perceptions of difficulties in gaining support except in the area of gaining support from a supervisor (see Table 5.11).

Table 5.11 shows that teachers with a postgraduate teaching qualification (usually a Master of Teaching degree following completion of an initial degree outside education) were more inclined to suggest difficulties in working with their supervisor than those with initial teacher education qualifications. Similarly, teachers who worked in a continuing position in one school were less positive about support from their supervisors than those who worked in more than one school. In the case of those who worked in several different schools, this may reflect the absence of an identifiable supervisor.



Table 5.11 *Significant Differences: Perceived Difficulties in Gaining Support*

Attribute or circumstance	Difficulties in gaining support Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)			
	Teaching staff	Executive staff	Supervisor	Principal
Age	1.74	1.60	2.75	2.92
Gender	3.49	2.27	1.69	2.95
Prior work experience	1.98	4.79	4.15	5.89
Qualifications	2.37	2.67	8.19*	2.22
Location	7.39	1.64	3.03	4.16
Employment status	3.13	1.00	3.66	2.79
No. of schools	1.71	6.51	9.28**	7.24
Class experience	4.36	1.44	3.00	4.79

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10\*, p<.05\*\*, p<.01\*\*\*).

### *Professional Development Activities*

In DET schools in NSW, professional development is typically provided at two levels. The first is attendance at professional development courses of varying duration, delivered by outside experts during a school day and away from the school site. Attendance of teachers at this form of professional development is costly for the school and involves a fee to attend the course, provision for travel (and sometimes accommodation) for the teacher, together with up to \$400 per day to replace a classroom teacher with a casual teacher. School budgets make notional allowance for approximately two days of professional development per teacher at this rate. A less expensive mode of professional development is that provided within the school's structures through meetings to which visiting consultants (who are generally provided to the school at no cost) may be invited.

Professional development activities were considered from two perspectives: the encouragement teachers received to access professional development both within and outside the school (that is, at cost to the school) and the degree to which teachers

reported improvement in their teaching as a result of attending professional development activities.

*Personal attributes and access to professional development*

Encouragement to participate in professional development activities outside the school but within school hours (that is, at cost to the school) was weakly related to only one personal attribute – that of prior work experience – with those who had had prior work experience reporting stronger encouragement to participate in school-funded professional development than those with no prior workforce participation.

When considering the effect of professional development on improving teaching, male teachers were less likely than their female counterparts to report success from participation in activities within school hours (that is, school-funded professional development) and those with postgraduate qualifications reported more improvement than those with initial qualifications from participation in professional development provided outside school hours (that is, at limited or no cost to schools).

*Professional circumstances and access to professional development*

Access to professional development was more strongly related to the professional circumstances of beginning teachers than to their personal attributes (see Table 5.12). Table 5.12 indicates that access to activities organised by both school and outside bodies (including departmental providers such as consultants as well as external providers) and occurring both within and outside school hours, was significantly affected by the location of schools, the employment status of teachers, the number of schools in which teachers had worked and the extent of continuing class-based experience teachers had had. Those in metropolitan schools and those in permanent positions were more likely than those in rural schools or in casual positions to access school-provided professional development (e.g., through in-school meetings and consultancy visits). Teachers who worked in more than one school and those with limited or no ongoing and continuing class-based experience had less access to professional development both on the school site and outside it than did those who worked in only one school and those who had responsibility for their own class.

Table 5.12 *Significant Differences: Professional Development*

Attribute or circumstance	Professional development Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)	
	Within school <sup>a</sup>	Outside school <sup>b</sup>
Age	2.90	5.49
Gender	1.23	1.48
Prior work experience	4.63	7.85*
Qualifications	0.70	7.27
Location	10.29**	4.01
Employment status	6.98*	19.06***
No. of schools	10.28**	15.48***
Class-based experience	15.48***	32.43***

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10 =\*, p<.05=\*\*, p<.01=\*\*\*).

<sup>a</sup> Attending PD “within school” is at little cost in time, money or organisation to school

<sup>b</sup> Attending courses external to (“outside”) the school involves: funding, organisation and the cost of teacher relief

*Professional circumstances, professional development and teaching improvement*

Professional circumstances resulted in significant differences in access to professional development; the same circumstances also were evident as contributors to differentiated experience of professional development as a means whereby teachers were able to reflect on and improve their teaching (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13 *Significant Differences: Improving Teaching (PD)*

Attribute or circumstance	Improving Teaching through PD Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)	
	PD outside school hours <sup>a</sup>	PD within school hours <sup>b</sup>
Age	4.05	7.12
Gender	4.56	12.68**
Work experience	2.50	7.17
Qualifications	10.61**	4.05
Location	14.75***	8.22*
Employment status	10.44**	10.89**
Schools	13.19***	13.61***
Class-based	11.51**	12.38**

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10 =\*, p<.05=\*\*, p<.01=\*\*\*).

<sup>a</sup> Attending PD “outside school hours” is at little cost in time, money or organisation to school

<sup>b</sup> Attending courses “inside school hours” involves: funding, organisation and the cost of teacher relief

### *Negotiating Professional Identity*

In this study, the choice by participants or respondents to seek to improve their teaching is regarded as part of the process of recognising their own membership of a professional community and of striving to meet both the actual and perceived expectations of competence of the profession (Wenger, 1998). Such reflection constitutes part of the process of negotiating and reconstructing their understanding of self-as-teacher. Respondents were asked to report on the methods other than professional development (a process largely under the control of the school rather than the individual teacher) that they had elected to use to improve their teaching.

Table 5.14 *Personal and Professional Factors and Professional Socialisation*

Personal attributes	School-wide groups	Individual school-wide activities	Professional development	Mentors
Age (Under or over 25 years)	Older teachers reported less encouragement to attend parent organisation meetings or to belong to school committees	Older teachers reported less encouragement in relation to participation in student reporting	No significant difference	Older teachers were less positive about the contribution of executive staff to their development but more positive about the contribution of consultants
Gender (Male or female)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference
Prior work experience (Career change entrant to teacher education or school leaver)	No significant difference	No significant difference	Teachers in rural schools reported less encouragement to take part in professional development outside the school	No significant difference
Qualifications (Graduate or post-graduate qualifications)	No significant difference	No significant difference	No significant difference	Teachers with post-graduate qualifications reported less contribution by teachers from their own school on their development

Table 5.14 *Personal and Professional Factors and Professional Socialisation (continued)*

Professional circumstances	School-wide groups	Individual school-wide activities	Professional development	Mentors
Location (Metropolitan and or rural schools)	Teachers in metropolitan schools reported less encouragement to attend parent organisation meetings or to exercise their own leadership skills	No significant difference	Teachers in rural schools reported less encouragement to take part in professional development within the school	No significant difference
Employment status (Casual or permanent status)	No significant difference	Casual teachers reported less encouragement to take part in discussion with parents	Casual teachers reported less encouragement to take part in professional development both within the school and outside the school	No significant difference
No. of schools (One school or more than one school)	No significant difference	Teachers who worked in more than one school reported less encouragement to complete student reports	Teachers who worked in more than one school reported less encouragement to take part in professional development both within the school and outside the school	Teachers who worked in more than one school were more reliant on teachers from other schools for their development
Class experience (Continuing class-based teaching on one class or fragmented teaching of several or many classes)	Teachers who worked in several or many classes reported less encouragement to take responsibility for a school program or be a member of a school committee	Teachers who worked in several or many classes reported less encouragement to complete student reports	Teachers who worked in several or many classes reported less encouragement to take part in professional development both within the school and outside the school	Teachers who worked in several or many classes reported less contribution to their development by consultants.

Teachers were asked to respond to seven items related to methods used to improve teaching, and these items clustered into two broad groups—formal and school-based collaboration (discussion with school-based teaching staff and with a teacher’s supervisor and attendance at professional development activities) and individual and private methods (critical reflection on teaching, professional reading and discussion with teachers from other schools) (see Table 5.15 and Table 5.16).

Table 5.15 *Significant Differences: Improving Teaching by Staff Discussion*

Attribute or circumstance	Improving Teaching: Staff discussion Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ ; (p)	
	Teacher discussion	Supervisor discussion
Age	2.08	2.10
Gender	0.26	9.08*
Prior work experience	1.49	5.22
Qualifications	0.05	13.32***
Location	0.75	1.79
Employment status	1.75	4.69
Schools	1.39	1.38
Class-based	1.22	3.48

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10 =\*, p<.05=\*\*, p<.01=\*\*\*).

Table 5.15 shows that personal attributes appear to have been more significant than professional circumstances in the success or otherwise of some school-based ways to improve teaching other than by attendance at professional development. Despite the fact that supervisors traditionally have responsibility for the development of their staff, male teachers and teachers who had postgraduate qualifications (Masters-level degrees) were less inclined than female colleagues or colleagues with initial teaching qualifications (Bachelor-level degrees) to see discussions with their supervisor; as assisting them in improving their teaching.

There were significant differences in age groups in reliance on more private methods of improving teaching such as critical reflection and professional reading to improve teaching, with those in the older group relying on these methods far more than younger colleagues. In addition, those in permanent positions were more successful

in using critical reflection as a tool than were those in casual positions (see Table 5.16).

Table 5.16 *Significant Differences: Private Means of Improving Teaching*

Attribute or circumstance	Improving Teaching – Private Activities Value of Pearson $\chi^2$ (p)		
	Critical reflection	Professional reading	Teacher discussion (other schools)
Age	11.88***	14.00***	1.57
Gender	5.25	6.15	2.55
Work experience	4.43	4.59	2.92
Qualifications	5.42	1.58	1.27
Location	2.26	0.59	1.64
Employment status	6.54*	2.85	1.36
No. of schools	4.40	3.17	1.53
Class-based experience	3.57	4.11	3.56

Note.  $\chi^2$  = chi-square statistic; p value (p<.10 =\*, p<.05=\*\*, p<.01=\*\*\*).

### *Career Direction*

Survey data identified the preferred career direction for the second year of teaching. Given a number of options which included permanent and casual teaching, employment outside teaching or overseas or return to study, it was notable that casual teaching was not a preferred option for any group of teachers. Options which indicated the capacity to teach one's own class were most favourably received and non-teaching options were selected by very few participants as their preferred options. For the most part, teachers sought a permanent teaching position on their own class.

### *Summary of Survey Data*

The above analysis of survey data, particularly as it is represented in Table 5.6, Table 5.7, Table 5.11 and Table 5.14 summary tables suggest that in many areas of beginning teachers' experience there is a statistically significant difference occasioned by either personal attributes or professional circumstances. Teachers'



personal attributes may have contributed to different perceptions of their reported gains in personal practical knowledge. However, professional circumstances appeared to be more strongly related to the difficulties experienced in teaching practice than were personal attributes. In the area of acquisition of knowledge of the context of teaching through participation in professional socialisation the effect of the difference in professional circumstances is marked. In discussing the negotiation of professional identity, measured through commitment to improving teaching, those areas of activity which depended on the individual were related more strongly to some personal attributes; those which were a feature of school-based activity were related more strongly to professional circumstances. The remaining discussion in this chapter considers the data emerging from the case study in relation to each of the professional activities of engaging in teaching practice, participating in professional socialisation and negotiating professional identity.

*Case Study Data: Factors Affecting the Experience of Beginning Teachers*

Case study participants evidenced similar sets of differences to those of survey respondents and provided in addition a more nuanced view of the significance of personal and professional factors in their teaching experience and knowledge development (see Table 3.2 and Table 3.3). Although case study participants showed a similar range of personal difference to the survey respondents, and at times acknowledged their own personal strengths and weaknesses, their stories reveal that it was to their professional circumstances, rather than their personal attributes, that they ascribed the success or otherwise of their first year of teaching.

Unlike survey respondents' situations during the first year, the stages at which case study participants' employment experience changed can be traced. Thus, although six participants are categorised below (in Table 5.17) as having "mostly class-based experience" by the end of the year, this had not been the case throughout the year: all teachers except Alison and Helen had begun as casual teachers.

Table 5.17 *Professional Circumstances of Case Study Participants*

Professional circumstance	Number	Names
Location		
Rural	2	Cate, Fiona
Regional city	4	Bianca, Dianne, Evan, Graham
Metropolitan city	2	Alison, Helen
Employment status (at year end)		
Permanent	4	Alison, Helen, Cate, Evan
Casual	4	Bianca, Dianne, Graham, Fiona
Number of schools		
One school only	2	Alison, Helen
More than one school	6	Bianca, Cate, Dianne, Evan, Fiona, Graham
Class-based experience		
Mostly class-based	5	Alison, Cate, Evan, Fiona, Helen
Limited class-based	3	Bianca, Dianne, Graham

Data were collected over three successive phases in the course of the longitudinal study, designated as Phase 1 (the first semester of teaching); Phase 2 (the second semester of teaching, that is, after six months of teaching), and Phase 3 (the second year of teaching). In the case study, differences which to some extent could be ascribed to professional circumstances also were related to the phase of development at the time data were collected—a refinement not possible with the point-in-time nature of the survey. This dimension of the qualitative data suggests that the phase in itself may have been a source of difference and there was a requirement in the data analysis to compare data not only within and across cases, but across cases within similar phases (see Appendix D).

This section of the discussion has been arranged in broader categories than the previous discussion and considers the differences which emerged primarily as a result of professional circumstances in teachers' engagement in the practice of teaching and their acquisition of personal practical knowledge; their capacity to participate in professional socialisation and acquire knowledge of the context of

teaching; and their progress in negotiating their own professional identity and gaining knowledge of self-as-teacher. A number of small vignettes of teachers' experience have been provided to exemplify the difference in teaching experience which arose as a result of differences in professional circumstances.

### *Engagement in the Practice of Teaching*

#### *Planning for Teaching*

Data from survey respondents had shown that personal attributes rather than professional circumstances made most difference in terms of teachers' perceptions of knowledge gain in planning and programming. On the other hand, the reported difficulties were more strongly related to teachers' professional circumstances. Case study participants tended to focus on the difficulties they experienced in this area and they too related these to their professional circumstances.

#### *Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations*

Case study data revealed that participants planned and programmed in different ways according to the requirements of their professional circumstances.

For those participants who were not in continuing, class-based positions the question of maintaining sufficient knowledge and skills to prepare programs had become a serious issue by the end of Phase 1 and the tendency to reduce the curriculum content and increase the behaviour management content of planning increased as the year continued.

#### *Bianca's experience*

Bianca, in facing a new school and new class (or classes) with each teaching assignment made every effort to prepare for her classes but her preparation relied on her being given notice of both school and class before a work day commenced. She required at least 12 hours notice before taking on a casual day's teaching. She explained her lack of appropriate and readily available teaching resources and hence her need for extensive preparation before teaching:

If they [a school requiring a casual teacher] called me in the morning I'd be stumped because I spend the night before preparing ...because I don't feel that I'm confident enough to say, well, I can take this in [to the classroom] (Bianca, Interview 1).

Her focus was on bringing to her class resources and activities that would occupy students for a day if the class teacher had left nothing specific for her to do. She programmed to an age group, something that built on only a very small proportion of the programming skills she had acquired in the course of university studies and practica and she was aware of her need for intensive content knowledge growth if she were to successfully teach any age group with minimal notice. She commented:

... if I have at least a day's planning, I can access the internet, and go ahead and find stuff relevant for an age group (Bianca, Interview1).

However, she was aware by the end of the second semester of teaching that programming skills were attenuating as she lacked the opportunity to construct longer-term plans for teaching. By the time of her second interview towards the end of her first year, Bianca saw her skills in programming deteriorating. She observed:

...what I might have lost, like... the skills I'd say for programming and assessing would be less acute now than after internship.... because casual days...oftentimes I'll have a folder with stuff that fits that stage and I'll pick that up and take it in...and it has activities or ideas for games and story starters...things like that...so probably programming would be something that I [have lost]....and assessing...because you don't assess as a casual other than mentally going, OK, well this child's here, aim something a bit lower for them; this child can handle this so you need to do more for them...but assessing and programming is something that's gone by the wayside as a casual...which is something that I really would like the opportunity to do more of, to be confident then as a full-time teacher (Bianca, Interview 2).

Casual teaching participants, more than those in cohesive situations, evinced considerable concern with the level of their content knowledge, aware that they could be called upon to teach any subject area to any class with minimal notice and minimal time for preparation.

*Dianne's experience*

Like Bianca, Dianne began her teaching as a casual day-to-day relief teacher and her desire to be fully prepared led to her planning for each lesson and, as she was able, for each teaching day: “If I don’t sit down and think about it—about each process that I should go through—then I don’t think I explain myself properly” (Dianne, Interview 1). She was initially concerned to make the most of every opportunity provided by the classes she was employed to teach and as such took the time to note down ideas she gained from the resources, displays and plans of teachers of the classes she taught. She was, however, acutely conscious that she lacked knowledge of the detail of subject matter content and was concerned to know that ahead of her students. “I have to do a lot of content learning...so if I need to teach it, I do endeavour to find out...make sure I find out before the day is out...” (Dianne, Interview 1).

Dianne planned each day she taught but was never confident that what she would be doing in a day was what she had planned. Sometimes she worked to other teachers’ lesson plans and sometimes to her own but the lack of consistency, and the fact that she would not know whose plan she was using until she arrived in the classroom, meant that there was always considerable uncertainty about whether or not her own planning would be used.

I would usually arrive at school in the morning and be told what I was doing for the day...whether I had the same class or three different classes ...a class every session...or, sometimes I would know the night before...it just depended what was happening in the school. Sometimes work would be left, most of the time they’d say...do whatever you like... (Dianne, Interview 2).

Despite her initial conviction that casual teaching would enhance her opportunity to learn, Dianne was singularly disappointed with her own knowledge gain after her first year of teaching:

I think about the only thing that I’ve strengthened is my knowledge of the key learning areas...I don’t really think anything else has... improved... to be honest... I mean, I don’t think my behaviour management is very good...or maybe I just don’t go about it the right way or something...I don’t think that’s a very good area for me...I’m

not sure if I really have the right sort of personality to be a teacher...  
(Dianne, Interview 2).

*Graham's experience*

After pre-service education as a primary teacher, Graham's first teaching assignment was a block of two terms teaching secondary classes (Years 7 to 10) at a central (Kindergarten to Year 10) school. In this assignment he was to teach English, history and geography, as well as computing studies, none of which he had studied formally since leaving high school almost ten years previously. He expressed substantial concern about his subject-matter content knowledge and reported:

...the major thing I need to improve on is how adept I am at teaching Stage 4 English and Stage 5 English after going from Stage 3 English...it's going to be a month or two months or three months where I finally grasp those ideas and start to understand them properly.<sup>1</sup> (Graham, Interview 1).

Graham worried that his lack of content knowledge would mean that he was ~~and~~ set hopeless ... and I don't know anything and I can't understand the concepts myself..." (Graham, Interview 1). He was particularly concerned for the students who would depend on him for their final semester's teaching towards their School Certificate and addressed his concerns by assiduous reading of student text books and forays into the internet to acquire the subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge he lacked. He described his teaching of this class as follows:

...and K had given me the topics...the two topics that had to be taught...for the School Certificate ...so I've [been]... teaching from the text...I've gone through the text ...um...with those two topics and that's all we've worked on...since I've been here. So that was ...that was quite simple for me... English, like I said, was a lot more difficult...it's been trying to find stuff from the book to ...having

---

<sup>1</sup> In New South Wales, Stage 3 constitutes the final two years of primary school; Stage 4 the first two years – Years 7 and 8 – of secondary school; and Stage 5 constitutes Years 9 and 10 of secondary school. At the end of Year 10, the final year of compulsory schooling, all students are assessed for their School Certificate.

worksheets to... copying on the internet...trying to find appropriate lessons... (Graham, Interview 2).

Graham was given programs by a senior teacher and was also given the opportunity to visit a large high school and take copies of theirs. However, his day-to-day planning and his in-class teaching relied heavily on the text books provided by the school and he worked from a day plan rather than from a long-term program of his own making. He described the difference in his understanding of secondary and primary programming:

Well, the programs I've got are the ones I got from...um... in geography from K (Head Teacher); and in history and English, the ones that I've got from W High School, and E (principal) has more or less said, "Look, add your little bits and pieces to those but...go with those" ... whereas if I was in the primary, I would have my own ...it's a different set up (Graham, Interview 2).

#### *Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations*

On the one hand, teachers in fragmented positions on day-to-day assignments were planning for unknown classes and were therefore planning generic lessons applicable to particular broad age groups. They made very few references in concept maps or in interviews to the development of their programming and planning skills and tended to be more concerned with syllabus or content knowledge (see Table 4.2). On the other hand, those in ongoing class-based positions (especially Helen, Alison and Evan) were able to identify changes in their programming by the time they had moved into the second year of teaching.

#### *Helen's experience*

Teachers who were responsible for a class of their own and who were located in the same school throughout their first year of teaching, namely Helen, Alison and Evan, were focused on planning throughout their first two years, seeing it as a skill they had improved as they became aware of the effect on their teaching of being well-planned, of the necessity to evaluate their program during implementation, and of the necessity to relate their programming to the specific needs of their students. Helen explained the changes in her programming process:

And I found when I really got into setting my program up properly, that helped a lot, because all of a sudden I was like, of a weekend... instead of spending the entire weekend trying to work out what I was doing, the following week, I was looking in there....saying, oh yeah, that's right, I said I was going to do this, this week, oh so I'll need to go buy this and this, and maybe do a worksheet on the computer, but it'd take less and less time...it's taken less and less time every time I've done it because now I'm sort of thinking, oh yeah and maybe I'll look a few weeks in advance if I've got a bit of time, I'll look a few weeks in advance, do a whole heap of worksheets... and all that sort of thing (Helen, Interview 1).

#### *Evan's experience*

Evan was able to see significant changes in his programming skills from Term 1 when the program had almost no relation to his teaching to Term 3 of his first year when he was attempting to direct his teaching from his program. In addition, he had developed the professional judgement and the flexibility to evaluate not only his lessons but his program and to make appropriate changes according to his students' response. He reported his changing perception thus:

I tried my hardest in Term 3 and I think I out-planned myself to a certain extent ...and I know that you can never over-plan, but I planned to use all these different things and after two weeks I found that the activities that I'd planned for them were just dead boring ...I found them dead boring also...so that meant whatever I'd planned just had to go...and ...so that was something... I thought ...wow, you can make sure you plan but be careful with the planning (Evan, Interview 2).

By the time Evan was thinking about programming for his second class, the focus on student learning as the purpose of planning was clear.

Yeah...there's no point in me planning ...planning, teaching and assessing things unless they're actually...unless it's actually directed at the students I've got in there, \_cause for instance, if I teach the students next year the same things I've taught some of the kids this year, well then, they just may not apply to them so ... that'd probably be the one thing I'd think about doing (Evan, Interview 2).

In addition, his organisational strategies had been refined to the point where the process of compiling his program was less intrusive on his personal life and more integrated with his teaching. By the time he was programming for his class in the



second year of his teaching in the same school and as a recently appointed permanent teacher, he was able to prepare his program for teaching a specific class, and to see it as far more than a requirement to meet the school's administrative demands. He reported this growing understanding as follows:

Last year it was like... oh I've got to sit down for the next week and do my program... but I find that [now] when it comes to that time there are maybe 2 or 3 things that I need to do... oh yes, I've forgotten to put an overview in for English or I've forgotten to put an overview in for this... so I've probably realised that...it's an important part of [teaching]... if I've got a program organised then I know that my term is organised or my year is organised, so I've come to the realisation of how that actually all fits together a bit. I use it to go from there to my daybook ... like I said it's [my daybook] a bit of a skeleton but it's all I need to go. So now I'm free from that process which I didn't think I'd get to for a long while (Evan, Interview 3).

#### *Alison's experience*

Alison was also realising the need to evaluate her program and use it as a guide to rather than a director of her teaching as her first year progressed. She said:

So you'll tend to find too, when ...um...like, there's a lot of stuff on my matrix that I don't actually get done...because you get to an activity and you find out that well, the kids actually want to go somewhere further for that ...or something that you think's going to be really quick and easy ...is the teaching moment...it's the thing that they're most interested in ...or ..you have a day when I'm away ...well we're not going back because we can't do that now...you know, we just don't have time to fit it in...and that sort of works ... (Alison, Interview 3).

Alison, like Evan, developed her programming skills to the point where in her second year of teaching in the same school she was able to program and plan for the learning she wanted to achieve with her students. She described her changed understanding:

...that's the biggest difference...is because you can see a child's development over one full year so you're probably less worried about trying to make sure that twenty kids do eight different activities, than at getting this one child ...here...by the end of the year...and I think that's the big difference. I think I'm more ...much more likely now to plan for individuals than actually plan lessons ... (Alison, Interview 3).

### *Professional Socialisation*

The most significant factors in survey respondents' capacity to participate in professional socialisation processes and activities (especially involvement in activities outside the classroom, induction, mentoring and professional development) were the extent of continuing class-based experience and the number of schools in which teachers worked, both of which were closely related to employment status. Similar effects were evident in the experience of case study participants. Other than slight differences in personal confidence, the personal attributes of teachers addressed in the survey (age, gender, work experience and qualifications) appeared to have very little to do with the differences in development of case study participants; the professional circumstances, and in particular the location of a teacher in one school and in an ongoing class-based position, were key.

#### *Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations*

##### *Mentoring and collegial support*

Neither of the teachers (Fiona or Graham) in short-term, class-based positions had opportunity for other than informal learning from colleagues. While Graham had been offered time at a nearby large high school to discuss secondary programming, the on-site support offered was general rather than specific to the curriculum areas he was teaching. Fiona reflected on the fact that the lack of someone to "bounce ideas off" was something she missed and said:

I guess just starting out there'll be times when you think, I wonder what will work better, this option or this one...it'd be good to have someone just to say "Well, I reckon...you know, that'd be a great way to go, I think. (Fiona, Interview 1).

For teachers in day-to-day casual positions (Bianca and Dianne) even this was rarely available and both reported that they often felt "invisible" in a school staff room:

I don't know if it's just with me but..., like today, you felt like you were standing on the outside and not knowing where to go for tea and coffee ...I would never in a million years on the first day in that school have gone ..."Which coffee cup can I use?" I think I was there

three or four months before I actually had a cup of coffee there...  
(Bianca, Interview 2).

Receiving support from other members of staff was a rarity but was valued when it was offered. Bianca described the ways in which other teachers had assisted her:

I think it varies from school to school, there are some schools where the only time I saw another teacher was at recess or lunch, unless they have to come and grab another child out of the class, whereas in another school, they'll sort of sit down of a morning and they'll say, okay, if you go to the front of the folder these are the children that must be exited as soon as you go to class, and if you have trouble with this person, don't hesitate to contact me, things like that... you know send a reliable student to come and get me and I'll sort out how to get to you, which has been great ... (Bianca Interview 3).

Bianca, as a casual, knew from her conversations with other teachers, that a mentor was not available to a casual teacher. She said:

I know that teachers that are first years out and stuff ...they have a mentor...or something...someone they can go to and who keeps an eye on them ...as a casual you don't have that... (Bianca, Interview 2).

#### *Access to professional development*

The lack of access to professional development for teachers in fragmented circumstances compounded the lack of access to informal support. Teachers in short-term, fragmented positions were given little access to formalised professional development and the result was a sense of losing touch with the profession and with the knowledge necessary to continue in it. Bianca observed:

When you come out of uni it's all rosy glasses and you've just learnt all this new stuff that even teachers haven't heard of, that are in there and I think after a year and a half you know that things change and that you're not tapping into that resource (Bianca, Interview 3).

In addition, information about ongoing professional development and the means by which teachers accessed it was very much a school-based learning and casual teachers remained on the outside in this respect. When discussing her lack of access to professional development, Bianca commented:

No, I personally haven't ...[attended any professional development activities]. I don't think they've even let me know some of the days that are coming up...I guess ...I should read boards more...I don't know if there's noticeboards where you can find out... But...there hasn't really been any development day ...there hasn't been any development days I've been to...since finishing uni...and I guess that is because I am a casual ...and not being in there all the time and knowing what's on and where and when...and things like that...makes it difficult...and then I think not being a teacher on staff you don't get the reduction in price so it costs money...or something...I don't know. Yeah, but I haven't actually been to any...not that I can think of (Bianca, Interview 2).

### *Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations*

#### *Mentoring and collegial support*

Observation of teacher acceptance by other staff showed that of all teachers visited, Alison and Evan were most at ease in their schools, known to other staff, interacting positively with those around them in out-of-classroom settings and actively involved in other teachers' activities and learning from them. However, not all teachers in permanent and cohesive positions were able to avail themselves of collegial support. The capacity to do so depended on the initiation by the school. Cate was more aware of collegial support from the principal of the school where she spent one term as a casual teacher and had no opportunity for mentoring, induction or professional development once she had been appointed as a permanent, continuing class-based teacher in a single school.

Evan's and Helen's experience of induction and mentoring appeared to be the most positive; it was the informal, "just-in-time" nature of these mentoring relationships as well as the opportunity to attend formal induction activities that provided the foundation for the relationship on which mentoring for these teachers was seen as valuable. Evan described the circumstances of his mentoring relationship:

...'cause we share a door ...so even during class time, he pops in to me sometimes and I pop into him so ... I suppose, it's very informal but it gets the message that you want to get, you know, what do I do when this happens and he can just go "Oh, do this"... but you know, ...and it's probably the same as all teachers ... they're not that difficult to get along with ...but um... you know, he's wonderful, he's

been great, actually... I hope he doesn't leave in any great hurry (Evan, Interview 1).

His confidence had also developed to the point that he was no longer in fear of “looking silly” when he asked a question of his mentor and the mentor was becoming his “first resort” as a source of the knowledge he felt he needed. He described his relationship as follows:

He's always giving me things that he does or ways that he does things or ...he's always lending a hand and always ...because he's such well-natured, I know I can go to him next day and say...and sometimes I even ask him... things that seem like silly questions, but I'd rather ask the silly question and get the simple answer than be the person that looks silly because I didn't know it ... you know, in front of the whole staff or in front of the whole school or whatever it may be...(Evan, Interview 2).

#### *Professional development*

Alison was highly enthusiastic about the opportunities for professional development she had been given. She had a very clear sense of the school's investment in her development and she was receptive of and enthusiastic about the professional development which the school arranged for her within the first year. By Term 4 she was beginning to consider her own development needs and was looking to take control of her own learning. She reported:

I'm sort of looking at areas you know, well if I had to do some PD [professional development], what sort of things ...like I've already been to a guided reading PD day which was fantastic ...I got a few really, really good ideas there and this is it...I mean they just throw...I've already been to a Philosophy in the Classroom PD, and that sort of stuff so ...and I've got my induction as well...so I've got another day next week where they get in all new teachers and they tell us about the department and start explaining those sort of rules and everything for us as well. So like, I'm looking at areas of PD for myself (Alison, Interview 2).

#### *School-wide activities*

Participating in school activities was an area in which continuing class-based teachers in single schools could develop relationships as well as knowledge and

skills and gain from sharing knowledge and resources with others. Alison described the benefits of collaborating with other teachers:

.... because we're actually working on a lot of these different committees and everything, like ...I'm getting much more involved in teacher talk (Alison, Interview 2).

Both Alison and Helen described programming sessions with their grade-based colleagues and joint teaching projects. Alison had joined the group of teachers who managed the breakfast club while Helen was running the primary school choir (despite being a Kindergarten teacher), an activity which required some reorganisation of teaching responsibilities by the school in recognition of the contribution she could make. Alison was involved in a curriculum committee developing a new scope and sequence of knowledge and skills for the school; and was intending to move on to becoming a whole school support for teachers in technology.

Evan had developed and trialled a new Physical Education homework program. He had built sufficient confidence to overcome the reticence he had earlier felt about saying anything in a staff meeting, sufficient to make a presentation to all the staff of the new homework program and was cautiously introducing it to other staff with the support and approval of his principal and his mentor. As his mentor supported him in taking on responsibility for grade-based activities (e.g., for organising a joint excursion) he was actively considering taking on greater responsibilities across the whole school in his second year in the school and thinking ahead to future years where he would be able to accept even more responsibility. He reported:

I co-ran the swimming carnival with Mark at the start of this year and we decided that for next year we have a swimming program and a swimming carnival so there's 3 weeks where they do about 6 or 7 lessons on swimming, this year and next year coming up I'll do the swimming lessons and Mark will do the carnival, on his own

... and I actually approached him about it and I said I wanted to learn to run a particular carnival or any of the carnivals, so that when they're gone... if one of them happen to retire or move I could quite easily say, yeah, I can do that, and that's mine... or if one of them is ill for a term or if one of them is on long service leave or whatever it might be, I know that I have the ability to do it and I think he would

be thinking that I do swimming this year, he does the carnival, and I think the year after he would be expecting me to do both so he can sort of phase his way away from those things, he would still help me out with any issues, but yeah, he's giving it to me (Evan, Interview 3).

### *Negotiation of Professional Identity*

#### *Teachers in Fragmented and Uncertain Teaching Situations*

Permanent, continuing class-based teachers in single schools tended to discuss their own identity in terms of growing confidence in their classroom practice. However, for those in fragmented positions there was a growing awareness that they were moving out to the edges of the profession. Bianca described her growing distance from the profession as follows:

I'm out here in the left field somewhere because I'm not in the system, I don't feel like I'm in the system, I'm on the outskirts and sort of touching into it every now and then, with a casual day, but like I said with the lack of professional development or being given the resources to go, well, these things are available for you to develop yourself, and that's why I feel stupid, I think, because I'm not... I don't feel like I'm developing, and going forward in some areas... but with maths, it has to be new progress in maths because I'm always learning, well this works, and this is something new; there's... I think... a new syllabus out with maths I haven't seen and probably there are new things to help literacy that I've never heard of ...like I go into a school and they'll talk about something and I'll go what's that, so I do feel like I'm not in the system (Bianca, Interview 3).

#### *Teachers in Cohesive, Continuing and Secure Situations*

In early discussions with participants who were in cohesive positions (Alison and Evan) there had been some ambivalence about their continuing career direction. Neither had originally expressed a life-long commitment to class-based teaching and Evan was considering a return to the family farm within five years. The success and satisfaction which each had experienced in their first year of teaching resulted in a commitment to continuing teaching and alternative careers had receded as choices for the immediate future.

*Summary of Chapter 5*

This chapter has described some of the differences in experience that have arisen as a result of different personal attributes and professional circumstances of survey respondents and case study participants. The above analysis shows that of the personal attributes and professional circumstances analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, those which consistently were most strongly related to teacher development were employment status (whether teachers were in permanent, temporary or casual situations) and the concomitant professional circumstances which arose from this position: the number of schools teachers had worked in and whether or not teachers had consistent and continuing responsibility for their “own” class.

The following chapter extends this discussion and considers the effect of these differentiated experiences on the development of the teacher knowledge base.



## Chapter 6 Results: Research Question 3

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to address Research Question 3 with results drawn from both the case study and the survey-questionnaire. This chapter therefore addresses the following Research Question:

How did differences in teaching experience affect teachers' development of their knowledge base of teaching?

This question focuses on the inter-relationship between the three professional activities of engagement in the practice of teaching, participation in professional socialisation and negotiation of professional identity and the development of the domains of knowledge which constitute the knowledge base of teaching, that is, personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher (see Figure 6). It presents data which demonstrate the way in which each process is related to each of the others, and examines the ways in which development in one area influences development in others. The data from this research suggest that the development of knowledge is a cumulative and symbiotic process: where teachers have access to cohesive and continuing opportunity to engage in the practice of teaching their concomitant opportunity to participate in professional socialisation and in the negotiation of professional identity results in knowledge development across all three domains. Where one of these processes is curtailed as a result of fragmented experience of teaching, then each of the other processes is similarly restricted and knowledge growth in all domains is limited.

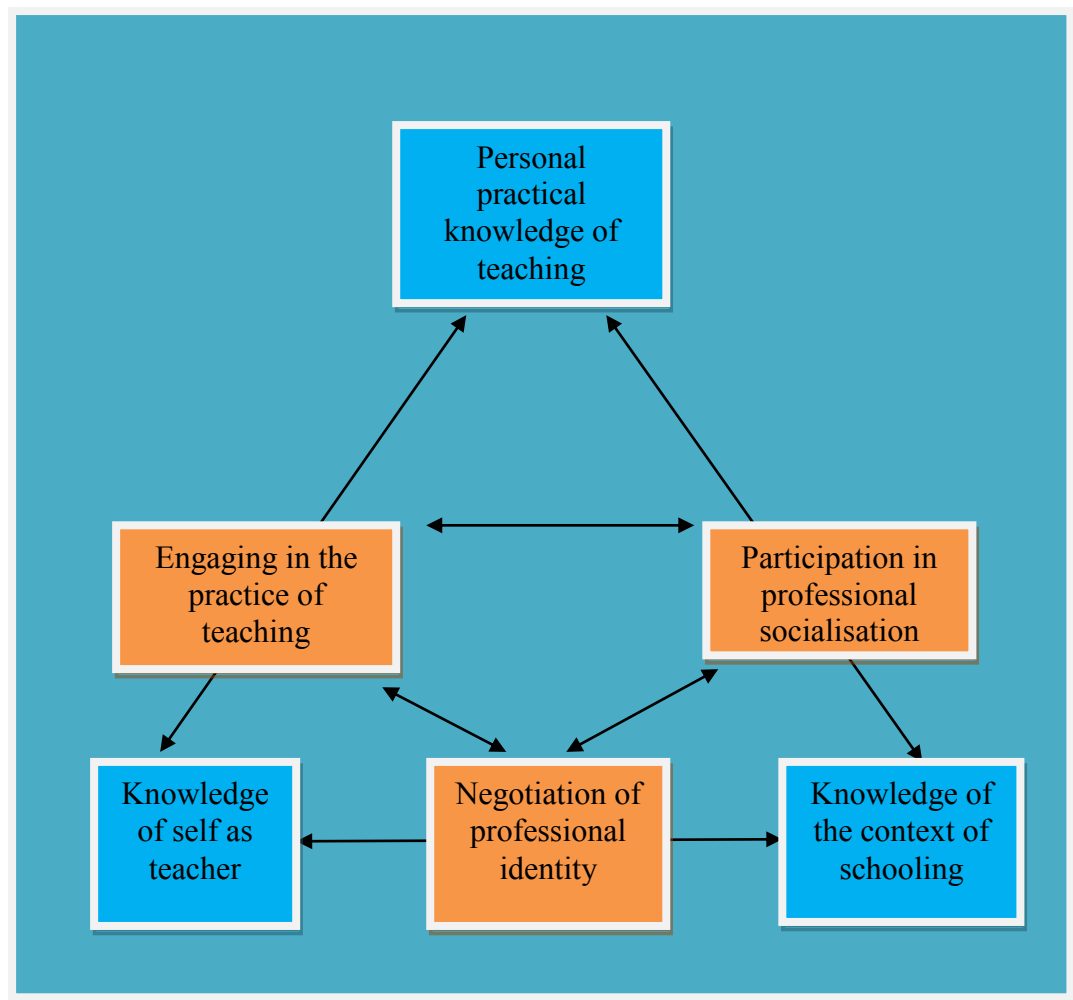


Figure 6 *Domains of knowledge and processes of knowledge acquisition*

Analysis of both quantitative survey data and case study interview data showed that these processes were interactive, inter-dependent and iterative. Although each process was related specifically to one type of knowledge, that is, engagement in the practice of teaching to content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge; participation in professional socialisation to the knowledge of the structure and culture of schools and systems as organisations; and negotiation of professional identity to the knowledge of self-as-person related to self-as-teacher, there were demonstrable links between each of the processes and all parts of the knowledge base.

This chapter is organised, therefore, according to the three relationships which are identified as critical in knowledge development:

- (i) The relationship between engaging in teaching practice and professional socialisation
- (ii) The relationship between engaging in teaching practice and negotiating professional identity
- (iii) The relationship between participating in professional socialisation and negotiating professional identity

### *Methods of Knowledge Development*

#### *Case Study Participants' Methods of Improving Teaching Practice*

Case study data indicated that learning in the first two years of teaching occurred as teachers reflected on classroom experience in the light of prior experience of practical and casual teaching; remembered and trialled the strategies they had seen other teachers use; engaged in some professional reading; undertook roles outside the classroom where support and encouragement to do so was provided in the school. In doing so learned to enact new roles; and approached colleagues and mentors to draw on situational knowledge. The development of personal practical knowledge was closely related to the professional circumstances in which teachers were placed and the opportunity they had to use their developing knowledge of the context of teaching to remedy identified gaps in their knowledge of teaching practice which could not be ameliorated by application of their existing knowledge base.

Data were collected over three successive phases in the course of the longitudinal study. These were designated as Phase 1 (the first semester of teaching; Phase 2 (the second semester of teaching, that is, after six months of teaching), and Phase 3 (the second year of teaching). In the first phase of teaching, growth in knowledge was often a matter of trial and error, dependent on circumstances outside the immediate control of the teacher and attained in an apparently haphazard manner as teachers reacted to the exigencies of their immediate situations. For most case study participants, there was little opportunity for or access to formal or informal professional development and induction, and formal mentoring was not a feature of most participants' experience. There were exceptions: Alison, Helen and Evan all

experienced formal induction professional development provided by the school and the wider education system in which they worked; only Evan and Helen had the benefit of a formally appointed mentor in their schools.

The data from observations and interviews show a range of private and more public sources of knowledge available to all participants in the early months of teaching: the context in which they were working and especially the support offered by the school appeared to determine the mix of these available to and availed of by the particular teacher. The following examples provide some snapshots of teachers' reflections on their work and have been selected as representative of the views of participants in general.

*(i) Using personal reflection on practice*

The process of learning to manage classroom teaching and student learning was one which was driven by urgency and the necessity to survive and was, as previously discussed, the overriding focus of teacher thinking in the first year. Evan's sense of initial overload, typical of case study participants and survey respondents alike, is reflected in his comment:

The first three weeks were a bit of a circus, really, for a while but we're getting around to it...so it's been quite good. But the load initially, when you get all those different scope and sequence things and you're looking through them and you think how am I going to fit all that in...but it sort of comes together once in a while (Evan, Interview 1).

Teachers had different perceptions about their own roles and their preferred classroom structures and procedures which were often based in their values and in their beliefs about good teaching. Their initial classroom formation reflected their individual preoccupations. They also had clear ideas about what constituted effective teaching, good student-student and student-teacher relationships and satisfactory and satisfying personal performance as a teacher. In the course of the first phase of teaching experience in the classroom and with students produced significant dissonance between these beliefs and values and the actuality of the classroom situation and their own role in it. Teachers engaged in reflection on what had

occurred in the classroom and in particular on links between teacher action and student outcome and used personal trial-and-error processes to formulate strategies in an attempt to reconcile the actual more nearly with their own ideals. Evan commented on his search for “something better”:

...there’s just a bit of feeling and when you reflect on it, it’s like, what ...could I have done better...and you know, obviously I think most times you can come up with something that could have been better than last time... (Evan, Interview 1).

In reflecting on what had “not worked” and in attempting to make improvements to their teaching, teachers utilised a variety of resources but often found it difficult when reflecting on their teaching to locate the source of their learning.

As continuing class-based teachers came to know their students, adjustments made to teaching programs which resulted in success were added more firmly to the knowledge base. For example, Fiona, in responding to a digital image of her youngest children engaged in reading books, discussed the success she had had in motivating her boys in Kindergarten to learn their sounds and start reading. She reflected:

...I couldn’t have done that in the first few weeks because I didn’t know what they were capable of... the first few weeks I spent a lot of time using the Fitzroys [readers] just to get a handle on what they can do and now I know...(Fiona, Interview 2).

In addition, as Fiona’s teaching proceeded and lessons became part of a continuing unit of work, she was able to adapt suggestions from texts, or the syllabus (her primary source of lesson strategies) to her own intentions, represented as learning goals for her students, as these in turn became clearer.

In the course of her first temporary teaching assignment, she relaxed her initial concern with fitting in all that she believed she needed to do to cover the syllabus program. She began to relax with her students and allow them to direct the learning at times, and was able to be more flexible in terms of the structure of the teaching day. She described herself (personal communication, Fiona, Interview 2) as trusting herself more and began to work with a little less concern for the opinions of the

principal or of the parents of students in her class, believing she was able to justify in educational terms the programs she was implementing.

Fiona appeared to have used her reading, other teachers and observable positive changes in her students' behaviour and learning to gain new ideas which she then consolidated by using them in her classroom and subsequently evaluating the outcome. During the first classroom observation she had brought in to the classroom an ant farm she had constructed. A digital image of the children clustered around the farm prompted this response:

I get all of these ideas either out of my head or from people I talk to...I just seem to be able to pick things up.....From lots of different teachers...older teachers, younger teachers...I've built up some pretty good friendships with teachers that I worked with on pracs ...that and reading about teaching...and just knowing what I'm doing...wherever that comes from ...I...see an idea and think or someone tells me an idea and I think, yes, that's a great idea and I just must be able to store it away because I'm that interested in it...(Fiona, Interview 2).

Evan had experienced similar success in establishing a model of a town with his students, a project that began as an exercise in mapping and grew into a major three-dimensional construction involving parents as well as students

Each student was supposed to build their own little town and I thought I haven't got the room to be able to have them build that town and store it somewhere and display it, so I said we'll make a big town where each person is responsible for building a part. [365] And it went from this big to that big before I knew it and once again, the kids just ...we were right behind me...and I had parents coming in saying, you know, "What do I need to do for this ...." ... it just ended up becoming from a real small idea with this town ....right, we'll build our own and it went like wild fire. (Evan, Interview 2).

By the second year of her teaching, Alison had established for herself the value of reflection on her own experience and saw it as the primary source of her learning.

It [the source of professional learning] would have been my own experience, I would say...yeah...it was actually having...and that capacity...and that's one of the big things I think at uni...I mean it drives you nuts ...you know, you think, God they're going to ask us to reflect again...I think, Oh Christ, if they ask me once more to

reflect on my learning, I'm going to...you know...but the thing is, it's being able to do that...all the time...to look back and say, what worked, what didn't work, what did I like, what didn't I like, how am I going to try and change it ... (Alison, Interview 3).

*(ii) Building on prior knowledge*

In seeking remedies to issues occurring in their classroom or practical ideas for teaching, participants returned firstly, to their university experiences. Initially, teachers worked from the knowledge gained in tertiary courses, taking information from the experience they had had firstly in practicum programs and in their internship and secondly, from the material covered in university lectures. Fiona described her initial excitement at melding the theory she had acquired at university with the practice she was engaging in her school and classroom.

I learnt a lot of theory which fortunately I can ...I think I transmit and put into the practical quite well, but there'd be some times where you can't do that ...what people have told you. ...I think I can reflect on things very well...I have that skill... here I can look and go...well, that teacher did that and I don't think that would work at all...or I might pinch that idea...and then I'll combine it with something I've read in a book...and yeah...I really enjoy doing that (Fiona, Interview 2).

*(iii) "Borrowing" from other teachers*

They also drew on their practicum experiences. Evan, for example, had taken a range of strategies for classroom management, behaviour management and programming from teachers he had worked with. He described the influence of his internship teacher on his initial understanding of programming:

Setting up the English programming...I got a lot of the activities, materials that my teacher on the internship had used and I'm sort of structuring it the same way (Evan, Interview 1).

Helen also described her initial attempts at programming in terms of what she had learned from other teachers at her school:

...a lot of the teachers did sort of see things that were happening in my classroom, and just say to me, oh why don't you try this.....Yeah...the librarian was very good because she had my class

on a regular basis, so she could pick things up that would help me (Helen, Interview 1).

In the initial stages of teaching, casual teachers saw their employment in a range of different schools and classes as opportunity to “pick up” new ideas; in the early phase of teaching, this in itself was seen as an advantage which outweighed many of the disadvantages of casual teaching perceived after the first six months of teaching. Dianne spoke of her efforts to make notes about the classroom organisation, displays of student work, teaching resources and classroom procedures that she saw in different teachers’ classrooms. She viewed her accessibility to other teachers’ rooms as a positive source of new ideas that would ultimately assist her to teach more effectively and commented:

I’m really pleased because I can see so many different ideas from so many different teachers. And I know there are things I wouldn’t have been exposed to in the same way, so I’m pleased that I’ve had the opportunity to look at what different people do (Dianne, Interview 1).

Similarly, during Phase 1, Bianca found the change of schools stimulating and commented that one of the positives of casual teaching was the variety of experience. She said:

[As a permanent teacher] ...I wouldn't have had the experience of different schools, different teaching environments, things like that... I would have been still in that little nutshell where I got used to one little group and I'd be happy and fine there and all the warm fuzzy feelings whereas this one it's new people, new environments all the time ... I'm enjoying the change of experience... I'm not stalemating...(Bianca, Interview 1)

In considering the array of knowledge and skills which constituted the knowledge base of beginning teachers, it became clear from the responses of survey participants that statistically significant differences were evident in every aspect of the knowledge base as a result of variations in the professional circumstances of employment status (whether permanent or casual); number of schools; and access to one’s own ongoing class. These circumstances were significant in exploring differences in knowledge acquisition about inclusive practice and in developing positive relationships with students. They led, as well, to significant differences in the levels of participation in school programs and the exercise of professional



responsibilities related to parent relationships, referral of students to specialist staff and student reporting. Professional circumstances were most profoundly related to access to professional development, whether organised within or outside the school. Professional circumstances accounted for differences in the level of difficulty experienced with students, parents, programming, reporting, assessment, accessing mentors and supervisors within schools and for levels of satisfaction expressed in preferred career options. The context in which teachers taught clearly was strongly related to the experiences they had and the knowledge they were able to gain from these experiences.

*Survey respondents' methods of improving teaching practice*

Data from the survey indicated that in order to improve their teaching practice respondents, like case study participants, relied on a variety of personal and school-based strategies. They also used critical reflection and professional reading, professional development within and outside school hours and talking to teachers from other schools (see Table 6.1).

This data suggested that over 90 per cent of teachers in both fragmented and cohesive teaching situations agreed that teachers on staff contributed to their development. However, a small percentage of respondents also recorded difficulties in accessing adequate support from some staff. Fifteen per cent of teachers identified difficulties in gaining support from other teachers and from supervisors; 11 per cent reported having difficulty gaining support from school executive and 10 per cent received unsatisfactory support from the principal of their school. Amongst these teachers, those in casual positions, with limited class based experience and working in more than one school were more likely to express difficulties than those who were permanent, working in a continuing position with their own class and working in only one school.

Table 6.1 *Activities Used to Improve Teaching Practice*

Activities used to improve teaching	Teachers in agreement (% of all respondents)
Assistance from other staff	100
Assistance from supervisor	90
Critical reflection	85
Professional reading	61
Attending professional development (outside school hours)	75
Attending professional development (within school hours)	81
Assistance from teachers outside school	66

Both case study participants and survey respondents indicated a need to rely on the resources of schools for support, advice and general professional development. The capacity of more experienced teachers to share ideas with beginning teachers at the point of need became a very important source of the practical and situational knowledge beginning teachers required. This aspect of the knowledge base was heavily dependent on the contexts in which teachers began their careers.

*Teachers in cohesive, continuing and secure situations*

Those who were appointed to schools as long-term contract or permanent teachers (for example, Evan, Alison, Helen, and later, Cate) acquired knowledge of school systems in an apparently haphazard way, often in reaction to a need to support their teaching program with resources or advice or to an apparently serendipitous and often informal invitation to participate in a school program.

In the first semester of teaching, it appeared that for most teachers in cohesive positions with their own continuing class, whether permanent or temporary, the process of socialisation was a difficult one. In general, teachers tended to work within private, reflective modes in the first phase of teaching, taking up other more public opportunities as they became familiar with their work setting and began to have confidence in themselves, in their colleagues and in the process of requesting assistance without necessarily incurring negative judgment about teaching competency.

The establishment of classes and organisation of classrooms was conducted almost in isolation. In the absence of appointed mentors, most teachers reportedly “muddled through”; in the presence of a mentor, there was opportunity to have problems solved more quickly. Evan, who “shared a door” with his mentor teacher valued the opportunity to “pop in” and to be able to ask questions and obtain support on what he termed the “housekeeping things” of learning his way around the school. Yet even he found it difficult to keep asking. He described his reluctance in these terms:

...being the type of person I am and that’s sometimes reluctant to go and see someone, I’d probably end up ...there’d probably be situations where I’d just end up dealing with it for a while and then try to develop my own sort of way about it... (Evan, Interview 1).

Increasing awareness of what teachers did not know produced its own dilemmas: a reluctance to demonstrate any lack of knowledge that could be construed as lack of competence combined with a need to seek advice in order to remedy emerging issues.

#### *Teachers in fragmented and uncertain teaching situations*

Those teaching in fragmented employment situations (e.g., Bianca, Dianne and Fiona) were far more concerned with developing knowledge of the employment system, with becoming familiar with the processes of obtaining employment and with learning to respond to the surface requirements of many schools in order to maintain their employability, often in the face of apparent apathy on the part of other staff. For the casual teachers, the lack of acceptance by staff made it more difficult to acquire the contextual knowledge necessary to succeed with students in a variety of schools. As well, their trial-and-error process was dependent almost entirely on their own resources.

You go out, you give it a go, and if it doesn’t work, it’s not you. It’s just that that doesn’t work for you and children don’t respond to you that way... (Bianca, Interview 1).

In many cases casual teachers did not have much access to the resources of the school; other staff were disinclined (or too busy) to give them assistance; and there was very limited opportunity to learn from students’ responses and develop or

consolidate successful strategies with confidence. In addition, very short term assignments meant that participants themselves were tending to use their break times to prepare for the next session and were thus even more isolated from the informal socialisation of the staff room.

### *Interactivity and Interdependence of Professional Activities*

#### *Relationship 1: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Professional Socialisation*

There was a clear relationship between the extent of teachers' participation in professional socialisation activities and the extent of professional learning they were able to gain about teaching practice. Factor analysis of survey data had identified four specific components of professional socialisation which were reflected in the experiences of case study participants: participating in mentoring relationships; taking on school-wide roles either by participating in working groups or taking individual initiative in matters related to students; and engaging in professional development both within and outside the school. In addition, the presence of willing colleagues from whom teachers could seek advice at the point of need provided another, often informal, avenue of support.

#### *Case Study Data*

Case study data indicated clearly the ways in which the presence or absence of these socialisation opportunities promoted or inhibited participants' development as practitioners.

##### *(i) Participating in mentor relationships*

Less often in the early phases, but increasing as the year progressed and their confidence in themselves and colleagues increased, they asked questions of more experienced colleagues or of other beginning teachers where senior colleagues were inaccessible. However, beginning teachers' preparedness to seek out such support (where there was no appointed mentor) was frequently a matter first of trying to establish classroom practice in order to be able to evaluate and prioritise requests for assistance; feelings of inadequacy seemed to lead to reluctance to approach others

until personal competency could be established. Evan's initial perception of his knowledge is described below:

I feel like I'm just sitting there and it could be me sitting there or it could be the bloke who works at the paper mill or the local café ...he could be sitting there doing the same thing because he's just sitting there, confused, basically...a lot of the time anyhow. Perhaps I should just speak up...just tell them I don't know what you're talking about (Evan, Interview 1).

*(ii) Taking on school-wide roles*

The capacity to participate in school-wide activities seemed to be one which was again dependent on the skills recognition offered by the school itself and this in turn was dependent on the employment context. Casual and temporary teachers, apart from Evan, were offered very little opportunity to extend their participation in any school beyond their classroom.

*(a) Group participation*

Participation in groups within the school was also initially limited by participants' reluctance to believe that they had much to contribute. For example, Evan took almost a year to feel comfortable in the context of the whole staff, believing that they regarded him as young and inexperienced. Initially he was very reluctant to speak at staff meetings. At the end of his first year, he offered other staff a well-developed program related to homework in physical education. Evan described the reactions of the more experienced staff as —shocked”: his perception of his role within the staff, and their perception of him, was as a learner only. His initial reluctance to share his program was to some extent validated by the reactions of some of the more experienced staff to evidence that in this particular area he had considerable expertise to offer. He explained:

Yeah and for a lot of them that would have been a real shock... [they] would have thought that I was just ...you know, the lad who did all the funny things ...(Evan, Interview 3).

*(b) Individual activities*

Participation in the life of the school was very much a self-initiated activity and case study participants' experiences ranged from one extreme—no activities outside the classroom—to increasing involvement in a whole range of whole school and grade-based activities, and a gradual acceptance of leadership within these activities.

Alison, in the course of her first year, had extended beyond her classroom to active engagement with the school's breakfast program, development of grade-based units and the excursions to go with them and she was beginning to become involved with the schools' information technology program. Cate, on the other hand, had been offered no opportunity to participate outside her classroom. Dianne had been forced into training a choir for participation in a local music festival as it had been part of the responsibility of a teacher she replaced. This was an activity she found stressful and for which she was entirely unprepared and only minimally supported. In contrast, Helen had taken on a similar role with primary students but as a musician herself, found the role a satisfying addition to her role as a Kindergarten teacher.

Where the roles which teachers assumed reflected skills or interests teachers already possessed as part of their personal repertoire, this expansion beyond the classroom was frequently a source of new understandings and new skills. However, other than Helen's and Alison's experience, there was little evidence that schools sought to extend teachers' range of activities by supported participation in activities beyond the classroom, nor that, for the most part, they actively sought to capitalise on the skills that beginning teachers brought with them and which could have been of benefit to all staff.

*(iii) Professional development*

Throughout the first year, participants reported very little in the way of formal professional development available to them. Helen, Alison and Evan had taken part in some limited formalised induction processes both within and outside the school and Graham had been encouraged to spend a day at a large high school to collect programs and discuss the courses he was to teach. The remaining participants had no experience of professional development and were provided with very little

professional input against which to set their ongoing class-based experience. Casual teachers were limited in their access to professional development and were also given less opportunity to take responsibility for school programs and to contribute to school decision-making. Apart from the detrimental effect on professional socialisation that exclusion from these activities implies, the data suggested that isolation from information as well as from colleagues is greater for those who remain in short term casual positions.

Bianca, replacing a teacher taking part in a mathematics workshop, reflected on how little new knowledge she had gained since leaving university:

There are things I'd like to be doing and building the skills...that I miss out on as a casual. Even today, seeing them [teachers at the school where she was teaching for the day] all working together doing their scope and sequence for maths...as a casual I don't get that...when you work together...and they probably throw out ideas at each other...like, I saw a couple of them say, "Well, I've tried this game...and that works well to help teach that skill"...I thought, "Oh, I'd love to have that...if it works, I'd love it" (Bianca, Interview 2).

*Progressing in knowledge development: Teachers in cohesive situations*

Where teachers experienced continuity in their teaching assignment, they were able to gain some measure of control over their work circumstances and some familiarity with their work environments by Term 3 of the first year (Phase 2). These teachers were able to set some tentative goals for themselves and their students and at this stage, knowledge growth was targeted to the achievement of these aims and resulted from a more conscious and purposeful seeking out of assistance and resources to address teacher-identified priorities. These sources were usually formal and informal mentors within the school and access to professional development activities within and outside the school.

*Failing to progress in knowledge development: Teachers in fragmented situations*

Where teachers continued in fragmented employment situations, the day-to-day or short-term nature of teaching assignments meant that each experience of a new

classroom provided opportunity for repetition of known strategies but little opportunity for the setting of longer-term goals or for the evaluation of purposeful programming and teaching against the attainment of learning outcomes for students. Teacher learning very frequently appeared to depend on their own personal resources and preparedness to initiate contact with others to deal with emergent issues and emerging dissonance. During the initial term of teaching in Phase 1, improving teaching was largely a matter of trial-and-error replication of known strategies with minor adjustments.

Dianne felt strongly the lack of interest or support from other staff at the schools she worked in and believed that such lack of support contributed to the difficulties she experienced and her eventual decision to leave teaching. She reported:

If you have the support from the teachers, or even if you're going to a new school and they don't let you in on what happens with their behaviour management ... policy or whatever you might want to call it, they don't tell you, you ask and there's no real support, like you're on your own, you know that you're probably not going to have a very good day (Dianne, Interview 1).

### *Survey Data*

The survey data suggest that not only were there areas of specific knowledge to be gained both about and through relating to mentors, group and individual participation in school-wide activities and attending professional development but that when beginning teachers had gained sufficient knowledge and confidence to participate successfully there was a significant advantage in terms of the consolidation of practical knowledge and of knowledge of self-as-teacher.

#### *(i) Participating in mentor relationships*

Those who had identified most positively with the support provided by mentors, who had been most positive about their opportunity to participate in school-wide activities through participation in groups or as an individual were also the majority of those who reported the most gain in practical knowledge. Of the 78 respondents who reported most gains in practical knowledge, 43 (55 per cent) were also among those who were most positive about the influence of mentors within and outside schools.



Similarly, of those who were most positive about mentor contribution (84 respondents), just over half (43) were also those who regarded themselves as having made most gain in practical knowledge (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 *Contribution by Mentors to Development of Practical Knowledge*

Practical knowledge	Most gain in knowledge n	Neutral re knowledge gain n	Least gain in knowledge n	Total n
Most positive re mentors	43	27	14	84
Neutral	20	39	26	85
Least positive re mentors	15	25	32	72
Total	78	91	72	241

*(ii) Taking on school-wide roles*

Being able to participate outside the classroom is reflected in greater gain in practical knowledge as well as a gain in knowledge of the wider context of the school.

*(a) Group participation*

Table 6.3 reports the percentage of teachers who agreed that they were encouraged to participate in group activities within schools, that is, in staff meetings and school decision-making; in school committees; and in meetings of parent organizations. Such participation broadened the scope of their professional responsibilities beyond the classroom and enabled them to engage with a wider group of professionals.

Table 6.3 *Extent of Participation in School-wide Group Activities*

Participation in Group activities	Teachers in agreement (%)
Participation in staff meetings	85
Participation in parent meetings	40
Membership of school committees	64
Responsibility for school program	71
Leadership of other staff	65
Within-school professional development	96
External professional development	81

Participating in school-wide groups gave teachers access not only to information about a broader range of policy and procedure than they required in their own classrooms, but also helped forge relationships with other staff who could in turn act as sources of advice and support when needed. The link between group participation and the development of practical knowledge is demonstrated in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 *Practical Knowledge and Participation in School-wide Groups*

	Most gain in knowledge n	Neutral re knowledge gain n	Least gain in knowledge n	Total n
Practical knowledge				
Most opportunity for group participation	41	22	10	73
Neutral	23	47	24	94
Least opportunity for group participation	14	22	38	74
Total	78	91	72	241

*(b) Individual activities*

Participation in activities outside the classroom but as an individual teacher in consultation with other staff was a source of increasing information and support for teachers once they had acquired knowledge of the processes by which access to support staff could be gained. Table 6.5 shows the areas in which survey respondents had been able work outside the bounds of their own classroom. This activity was described in terms of relating to specialist staff who could provide assistance with students' needs; completing student reports, usually in consultation with other members of staff; taking responsibility either solely or jointly for a school program; and exercising leadership skills to assist other members of staff. Compiling student reports was an area in which teachers found considerable difficulty: one-third of teachers said they had difficulties with reporting student progress and a quarter had difficulty relating to parents. These activities are dependent on a cohesive school-based context for success and some beginning teachers identified continuing difficulties in these areas by the end of the first year.

Table 6.5 *Extent of Participation in Individual Teacher Activities*

Participation in individual activities	Teachers in agreement (%)
Discussion with parents	85
Liaison with specialist personnel	85
Compiling student reports	89

*School-wide participation and development of practical knowledge*

Those who had most opportunity for participation in groups and as an individual outside the classroom made most gain in practical knowledge; those who reported most gain in knowledge were those who had most opportunity for both types of participation. The interactive relationship between participation in the school-wide context either in groups or in individual activities and gain in practical knowledge of teaching is shown in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 *Practical Knowledge and Participation outside the Classroom*

	Most gain in knowledge n	Neutral re knowledge gain n	Least gain in knowledge n	Total n
Practical knowledge				
Most opportunity for individual participation	41	22	10	73
Neutral	23	47	24	94
Least opportunity for individual participation	14	22	38	74
Total	78	91	72	241

Table 6.6 suggests that knowledge of school context is strongly related to gain in practical knowledge and that belonging to a school in which these activities are supported is a significant contributor to the expansion of the teacher knowledge base in both the domain of contextual knowledge and in that of practical knowledge.

*(iii) Access to professional development and knowledge growth*

The capacity to participate in professional development activities impacted on all three domains of the professional knowledge base. Professional development programs provided participants with additional knowledge and skills in curriculum and teaching practice, and in policy, practice and expectations of the system and the profession. They also affirmed for participants that their own commitment to improving their teaching was recognised by schools and contributed to strengthening professional identity in providing opportunity for new teachers to meet others outside their schools but within their profession; These professional development programs often inducted beginning teachers into a wider community of practice within their geographic or interest area. Table 6.7 shows the relationship between access to professional development and gain in practical knowledge. Those who had most access reported most knowledge gain; those who had least access reported least gain in knowledge.

Table 6.7 *Practical Knowledge and Professional Development*

	Most gain in knowledge n	Neutral re knowledge gain n	Least gain in knowledge n	Total n
Practical knowledge				
Most participation in professional development	45	37	18	73
Neutral	22	36	38	94
Least participation in professional development	11	18	16	74
Total	78	91	72	241

Being a casual teacher, working in more than one school, working in a rural school and having limited ongoing class-based experience were all professional circumstances which constrained access to attendance at professional development activities. Beginning teachers, limited in their day-to-day practice by their circumstances of fragmented employment, were further disadvantaged by the fact that they were offered limited opportunity to engage in professional learning and in professional dialogue with other teachers and hence were not able to utilise these sources of professional knowledge in their own learning.

*Relationship 2: Engaging in Teaching Practice and Negotiating Professional Identity*

The data obtained in this research provided information about a number of areas related to the negotiation of professional identity and linked to teaching practice. These included the impact on perceptions of self-as-teacher of the issue of behaviour management and classroom control; the fragility of self-image as a teacher conveyed by perceptions of the validity of casual teaching as “real” teaching; the reasons enumerated for becoming a teacher; and the career directions of respondents and participants.

The issue which most often pointed up the fragility of beginning teachers’ professional identities was that of behaviour management. To some extent, the capacity to control the class became the yardstick by which teachers measured their own success as teachers, and the one by which they believed others measured them.

*(i) Practical knowledge of behaviour management and professional identity*

The opportunity to experience improvement in classroom control and the capacity to work on the issue of the balance between behaviour management and curriculum endeavour in teacher focus was limited for casual and temporary teachers in short term assignments; dealing with behaviour management so that it could become a background to effective teaching was available only to those who were able to work in continuing and cohesive school and classroom settings and develop a sound, reasoned and student-oriented basis for choosing one strategy rather than another from a menu to accommodate classroom issues.

Too often beginning teachers searched for “what works” through a menu of remedies or strategies and were unable to target strategies to particular situations—if a strategy “worked” (and it was often discovered to work by accident) to remedy an unsatisfactory situation, it became a part of the teacher’s increased working repertoire until it too required adjustment or replacement. This was particularly noticeable in the successive ways in which class-based teachers sought to implement whole class reward schemes to improve student “behaviour” (student inattentiveness, inappropriate student interactions with other students or with the teacher and failure to complete set tasks) and in the ways in which these teachers made frequent modifications to classroom routines.

As the year progressed, teachers in cohesive situations tended to focus more around the needs of particular students and the strategies they knew “worked” with particular students. For those in casual teaching situations, the only options appeared to be the repetitive use of a menu of learned strategies applied to classes as a whole without regard for the particular needs of the most disruptive students. With little opportunity to get to know the children they were teaching, casual teachers were caught in a situation that they were unable to remedy, regardless of the extent to which they acknowledged it as difficult, unsatisfactory, personally unsatisfying and exhausting.

Casual teachers and those in short-term temporary positions experienced the most difficulty with management of student behaviour. Bianca, for example, used a menu

of strategies throughout her teaching day, directed at the whole class, selecting and discarding different ones as they proved successful or unsuccessful in promoting the type of learning environment she desired. Although she tried to vary teaching strategies as well as management strategies, these were not always successful and by the end of a day she was left wondering what to try next.

Dianne experienced many days as a casual teacher where she regarded the behaviour of students as unsatisfactory but found it difficult to respond appropriately and remedy the issue. As she reported:

Oh, I think the major disadvantage is that you don't know the ... or well, generally speaking, you don't know the children very well and they have little or no respect for you because they know either you're not going to be there the next day, or even if you are there the next day, maybe they'll be able to get away with whatever it is that they're doing so ... I think that they definitely have less respect for you, which obviously makes it a bit harder ... and also the other thing is, if you're not going to a school where the staff are supportive it's very difficult. Some schools are, some aren't. I think that's really a major issue for some schools and they probably don't even realise. (Dianne, Interview 1).

As Dianne continued in what was for her a disappointing role, her self-esteem became lower, and her uncertainty about teaching as a career crystallised by the end of the first year into a conviction that teaching was not the career for her. She reported:

I just find...and this happens all the time...that no matter what I do, no matter which strategies I use or which variety or combination or any which thing I could possibly choose to do, that kids will just constantly talk over the top of me to the point where I think, well, what else can I do...there's things that make me think I really don't have any control there...it makes me think I don't have any control...they don't do that when other teachers are around (Dianne, Interview 2).

Bianca also acknowledged the importance of behaviour management to her day-to-day work and in attempting to —measure” the proportion of her teaching focus she identified behaviour management as half her focus in the first semester and her whole focus by the second year. The place of behaviour management as a concern

had increased for her as it had for Dianne with experience at the same time as it had decreased for those of her colleagues in class-based situations.

Behaviour management is half my focus because I have to have a certain amount of behaviour management in a classroom before I can implement anything I have prepared...I set that up first thing in the morning...I feel I won't get anywhere with the children otherwise...it will be a day where they run the class and I just sit down going –Oh, my goodness...” So for me as a casual, behaviour management is half my focus... (Bianca, Interview 1).

By the time Bianca had completed her third interview, she had made little progress; –being a casual I think behaviour management is what you deal with all day” (Bianca, Interview 3).

As participants moved into the second term of teaching, teachers in cohesive situations began to gain confidence in –what worked” —at least with the current class—and purposeful changes began to be made. Teachers in fragmented situations had little opportunity to make well-reasoned changes to their strategies and techniques. Hence, behaviour management remained a highly contentious issue for all teachers in fragmented teaching situations, one which typically they were unable to resolve, recognising firstly, that lack of knowledge of the children they were teaching precluded development of effective and student-centred management strategies and secondly, that calling on others to assist may jeopardise their future employment opportunities if they were thought to be unable to manage a class.

*(ii) Perceptions of casual teaching and professional identity*

Even before starting her teaching, Alison had observed the relationship between casual and permanent teachers in the schools in which she had practised and she observed:

I think it's status within the schools too. Your status as a casual teacher, even if you're there on a long-term block... I think you're very much the next peg down. And that's the feeling... The casual teacher – it's almost interchangeable - that you could be anybody... you're just this warm body that comes in – and having seen the different ways that teachers in schools treat casual teachers ... (Alison, Focus Group Interview).



In commenting on her experience of casual teaching, Cate reflected:

I didn't feel like a teacher...because I couldn't...you walk into the classroom and the teacher might have left stuff but you can't see where the kids have been and you can't see really where they're going, so you're just...basically as a casual I just got through the day and thought, well, you know, it's the teacher's [responsibility] (Cate, Interview 1).

Where teachers were fortunate enough to be allocated a mentor, or to have informal access to experienced and sympathetic colleagues, they were able to source new ideas to address their issues relatively quickly; without this input the process of seeking workable solutions to classroom issues was more difficult, more prolonged, and had more limited success and the knowledge base was comparatively less well developed.

*(iii) Developing a view of self-as-teacher*

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) describe professional identity as a teacher's "story to live by," (p. 95) multi-faceted, composed, sustained and changed in the course of a teacher's life. Professional identities are born and grow in the histories of teachers. The starting points for some are early, for others much later – but survey respondents and interviewees within this research study could recall a personal beginning point, a time when they began to see themselves as future teachers, and for most this was well before entering a teacher education course.

(iii) The relationship between participating in professional socialisation and negotiating professional identity.

*Negotiating Professional Identity: Case Study Data*

Professional identity for all the teachers in this study was negotiated by reference to personal and professional contexts, and was a process of reconciling personal ideals with practical realities.

As pre-service student teachers, factors outside the personal came into play as they became practising teachers, if only for a short while, in the course of university

practicums. It was in these periods as a “student teacher” that the professional first became integrated into the personal – and it was here that student teachers first began to reconcile discrepancies between the established personal facets and the emerging professional facets of their identity as they faced the realisation that the pragmatics of the classroom at times forced compromises in the practical expression of long-held beliefs and values about self and teaching.

Alison, Evan and Dianne all recalled internship and practicum experiences which had been extremely difficult and had left them wondering if, after almost four years of study, teaching was the career for them. Graham, a mature aged entrant who had spent five years in scientific laboratory work prior to commencing his teacher education program, described his early thoughts about teaching in relation to teachers he liked and those he did not. His perception of teachers “~~h~~aving that attitude of being an army sergeant” as those who were not to his liking, was embodied in his own attitudes to students revealed in classroom observations as well as in interviews. The data showed that regardless of the provocation offered by a number of students in his classrooms, Graham remained true to his original image of who not to be, and of his developing perception of himself as a calm and reasonable, rather than autocratic, teacher, a professional demeanour which he perceived to be a professional outgrowth of himself as person.

I try and stay as calm as I can...I’m not one to raise my voice...I try and use my voice and project it...also giving the child an option...so just keeping a calm demeanour and like...that’s the type of person I am as well...like even in general life...and whatever else, I tend to go about my way without getting too cranky and too fussed and too stressed...so just not letting the children see that I may be getting flustered over something that might be trivial to them which could be important to me....yeah....just going about my way in a calm and professional manner (Graham, Interview 1).

In discussing her progress as a teacher at the end of eighteen months of teaching, Cate also linked the personal to the professional and saw them as too closely entwined to separate. Early in her career she had described the difficulties of moving out of home at the same time as taking up her first teaching position and the difficulties of adjusting to the responsibilities of independent adulthood as well as professional teacher. At the end of eighteen months she reflected:

I can't separate the professional from the personal because they have affected each other, and yeah, I feel a lot more settled now I've got the house... and that's...I'm settled into that...I'm settled in adulthood. Last year was a shocker...I mean, I was ready to quit teaching, I was unhappy...and this year it's been completely different. I think I'm just at school and I made a decision to be myself, to not worry what other people thought or said, or anything like that (Cate, Interview 3).

When the beginning teachers experienced difficulties in their first year of teaching, it appeared to be their self-as-person that suffered. When Cate was finally appointed to a school as a permanent teacher, the supports offered by the school were minimal, she was not welcomed by the school having replaced an anticipated and preferred casual appointment, and her situation left her feeling less self-confident than she had felt as a student:

I've never had anyone really doubt me, and think that...I've never had the feeling that people have thought that I was a complete idiot that didn't know what she was doing until I came here... (Cate, Interview 2).

Unable to achieve the target for Kindergarten reading levels set by the school, she believed it had to do with her own inexperience.

... because I was new, I thought I'm doing something wrong, I'm doing something wrong, there's something I'm missing out on...this can't be right... (Cate, Interview 2).

Talking about a time when a school cancelled the casual "days" they had previously booked with her, Dianne could acknowledge that perhaps the school situation may have changed, but her reflections were based in feelings of personal inadequacy.

Sometimes you think, is this just me...maybe he'd [the principal] decided that he wouldn't have me there because that's where I had limited experience and maybe that looked like I didn't know what I was doing...And I just felt that was a reflection on me. (Dianne, Interview1).

Fiona, a journalist for seven years before re-training as a teacher, explained her desire to change professions by comparing what she saw as the social value of each profession. She described the difference between journalism and teaching:

[Journalism was] challenging but not rewarding. And teaching...it's fundamental to our society that children are educated as best they can be, and I want to be a part of that... (Fiona, Interview 1).

Like many of the survey respondents, Fiona had a long-standing aspiration to become a teacher and a family background which she believed had led her to this career. Fiona identified her first desire to be a teacher as arising at the age of ten, when she ~~used~~ "to teach" her sisters — "it's just something I've always wanted to do" (Fiona, Interview 1). In addition, this personal leaning towards working with children initially arising in family relationships was often affirmed by memories of the school situation itself. For many of these beginning teachers, conceptions of professional identity appeared to lie in memories of particular teachers known in their own school days. That these are important, well-retained images in the minds of beginners is reflected more in the narratives of interviewees than in the comments made by survey respondents.

Bianca, reflecting on her own reasons for becoming a teacher, sought explanation in both her family situation and her schooling:

I wanted to be an early childhood worker from primary school...about Year 5 in primary school...probably the fact that I have a lot of brothers and sisters and cousins and always liked working with young children, being around young children. (Bianca, Focus Group Interview)

Her first ideas of what teaching constituted were expressed through remembering her own teachers:

I think I pictured two or three of my favourite teachers in primary school and I thought well, I'd like to be like them...they were generally the people that always had a smile...had the time of day to sit there and have a chat – always made class interesting. ..and the smile...I think the smile is what I pictured most on their face... (Bianca, Focus Group Interview)

Later, when Bianca had spent several particularly frustrating and difficult days as a casual teacher, she described herself, using the same image almost as a yardstick for her view of a ~~good~~ "teacher".

I don't know if I am [a good teacher]...I don't feel that I know I'm a good teacher...in that programming-assessing-day-to-day teaching...I mean I feel like I can be a good casual...I feel that I can walk in and still smile at the end of the day...if I can do that I feel like I'm a good teacher if I can do that...I haven't lost it... (Bianca, Interview 1)

Like Bianca, Graham had a long-remembered understanding that he would one day be a teacher and his own image of a teacher was based specifically on those of his own teachers he had liked or disliked during his own schooling. He stated:

I'd always...this is going back from years and years ...I've always wanted to be a PE teacher from as long as I can remember...it's something that I kind of always wanted to do. I think it came from me having teachers that I didn't like....that if I could have a chance to be a teacher there's no way that kids that I taught would ever think about teachers in that regard. Thinking about the teachers that really made a difference to me ...and thinking that I'd like to be like that (Graham, Interview 1).

### *Negotiating Professional Identity: Survey Data*

Respondents to the survey identified the existence of a long-standing personal quality (expressed in such terms as such as —liking children”) which seems to have been recognised long before formal teacher education was considered. This personal quality became part of the confirming experience and as such became embedded in the personal narrative giving meaning and sense and coherence for many to that much later decision to —become a teacher”.

Survey respondents' reasons were embodied in statements such as:

I believe that the art of teaching comes naturally to me. It is my passion and it's what I do best (SR040901).

I did work experience as a teacher and like it better than other jobs I had previously had (SR020401).

I thought it would be a satisfying career, where I could impact on the lives of children today and create a fun learning environment for them (SR040301).

Many survey respondents remembered family situations where they were involved with young children and these were seen as experiences which established them as people (or even children) who understood young children:

Coming from a large family I have always been involved with children (SR030401).

Have always had a natural “knack” with children, lots of younger cousins when growing up... (SR040701).

In response to the open question, “Why did you become a primary teacher?” survey respondents offered a range of reasons and provided 463 responses in total. Of these, half were related to their attitudes to children; a quarter to their evaluation of their own personal attributes in terms of education or work experience and 23 per cent were related to beliefs and values about teaching as a career (see Table 6.8).

Table 6.8 *Reasons for Becoming a Primary Teacher: Open Response Item*

Reasons for becoming a teacher	n	%
To help children learn	97	21
I enjoy working with children	97	21
A rewarding / challenging / fulfilling career	56	12
Suits personal qualities or qualifications	53	11
To make a difference to children	37	8
Always wanted to be a teacher	31	7
Lifestyle is attractive	32	7
Previous work experience – positive or negative	23	4
To improve society	20	4
Own school experiences – positive or negative	14	3
Unsure	3	1

*Relationship 3: Participating in Professional Socialisation and Negotiating Professional Identity*

*(i) Professional identity and career continuity*

As beginning teachers in fragmented employment contexts realised that becoming the teacher they wanted to be would be a slower than anticipated process, career continuity became a concern particularly for those not yet in permanent work. Survey respondents expressed overwhelming preference for full-time, permanent work as a class-based teacher (see Table 4.11). The preference for permanency and class-based positions was strong and represents a reflection of respondents' views about what led them into teaching in the first place. Very few were looking for the flexibility of casual work at this stage of their careers: all were looking for the opportunity to teach their own class of students in a secure and cohesive school environment.

*(ii) Professional identity and career direction*

However, even those in permanent positions were not settled in life-long conceptions of teaching as a career until the consolidation of knowledge at the end of the first year provided them with evidence of their success as a teacher. Both Cate and Alison had initially identified a preference for continuing with other educational, non-school-based work as consultants or counsellors. Evan had intended initially to return to the family farm after about five years of teaching. It was not until the end of the first year that teaching as a career with a less fixed termination date was contemplated.

*(iii) Professional identity and membership of a school community*

Coldron and Smith (1999, p. 715) observed that teachers' professional identities are manifested in their classroom practice. As case study participants exercised choices within possibilities constrained by the norms, customs and traditions of the school, the system and the profession, their professional identities were strengthened or weakened by their classroom experiences.

The first year was one of steadily increasing confidence for those who had the school and classroom settings within which to develop their professional knowledge. Casual teachers on the other hand, were limited in their access to professional development and were also given less opportunity to take responsibility for school programs and to contribute to school decision-making. For Bianca, the day when she “felt like a teacher” (Interview 2) was the exception rather than the rule in her experience as a casual teacher.

It’s a huge thing for me not knowing day by day, week by week, not just with work...financially I can’t plan...and what days I can stay home and clean up and get those things out of the way... Primary teaching is still very much wishy-washy for me...I love it...I know I want to do it...but I wish that it was... two days a week or one day a week and to be drawn into that school environment, not be an outsider. (Bianca, Interview 1).

From the data, it is evident that for teachers, learning is both individually and socially constructed. Teachers’ knowledge of the practice of teaching develops in the individual setting of their classroom through a range of largely reflective cognitive processes while their knowledge of the context of teaching develops through the social setting of the school. However, it is in relationship to others in the school setting and in response to input from colleagues, mentors and professional development events that reflective processes are effective and developmental and that professional identity is negotiated and reconstructed.

### *Summary of Chapter 6*

In this chapter, data have been presented from both qualitative and quantitative sources to indicate the relationships between teachers’ activities of engaging in teaching practice, participating in professional socialisation and negotiating their own professional identity. These processes were interactive and interdependent and each contributed to the domains of practical knowledge, contextual knowledge and personal knowledge which comprised the knowledge base of teaching. However, the extent of knowledge gain was inconsistent and differences in knowledge acquired over the first two years were related to differences in the circumstances of each participant and of groups of survey respondents.



The following chapter synthesises, analyses and evaluates the research data, discusses the findings in relation to each research question and to the overall research aim and indicates implications for further research and for educational policy and practice.

## Chapter 7 Discussion: Findings, Implications and Recommendations

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the research in relation to the research aim and the research questions; to draw conclusions about the implications of the findings and their significance for educational research, policy and practice; and to make some recommendations for further research and future action in educational policy and practice based on these conclusions.

This chapter addresses firstly the overarching research aim that was identified in chapter 1. It then discusses each of the contributing research questions and links each to the results of the study as discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6 and to the major research literature reviewed in chapter 2. This discussion is followed by one which focuses on the implications for policy and practice to be drawn from the study and makes recommendations for further research and for future action in educational policy and practice.

### *Presentation of Overall Findings*

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of differentiated employment context on the development of beginning teachers' knowledge base of teaching. This study found that the employment context in which the teachers represented in this study first began to teach was central and critical to the development of their professional knowledge base. In reaching this overall conclusion, several contributory findings related to the *research aim* were extracted in relation to the work lives, especially the teaching experiences and career paths, of contemporary beginning teachers in New South Wales, Australia.

These findings were related to:

- i. the context of beginning teaching
- ii. the composition of the knowledge base of teaching; and

- iii. the concepts of experience and expertise and links between them expressed in terms of phases within the first two years of teaching and stages of competency development in teaching over the same period.

Following discussion of each of the above, further findings are discussed in relation to each of the *Research Questions*:

- iv. Research Question 1: Reported changes in the knowledge base of beginning teacher;
- v. Research Question 2: Effect of variation in personal attributes and professional circumstances on teachers' experience of beginning teaching; and
- vi. Research Question 3: Effect of differentiation in teaching experience on development of beginning teachers' knowledge base.

The chapter, and the thesis, conclude with a discussion of the *implications* of the findings for educational research, policy and practice and the *significance* of these implications. *Recommendations* arising from the implications are presented. The implications for research, policy and practice are as follows:

- (i) Implications for further educational research in the experiences of beginning teachers in fragmented employment situations beyond NSW;
- (ii) Implications for educational policy in beginning teacher employment; and
- (iii) Implications for educational practice in the provision of support for beginning teachers.

(i) *Findings Related to the Context of Beginning Teaching*

The first significant finding related to an expansion of the concept of the context of beginning teaching. The data from this study broadened the construct of "context" previously used throughout the literature on teacher development (for example, Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Bullough et al., 1992; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1986; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Whereas the aforementioned studies limited the idea of

“context” to the nature of the specific schools in which teachers were located and in doing so identified differences in these schools as contributors to differences in knowledge and competence, this study identified a broader context in line with the changing employment situation of Australian teachers. The data from this study suggested three characteristics of teachers’ contemporary employment context as significant factors in the development of teacher knowledge. These were: employment status (employment as a permanent or a casual teacher); the number of schools in which a teacher worked in the initial years of teaching; and whether or not a teacher was continuously employed to teach a class of students demonstrably his or her own”.

### *Expanding the Concept of the Context of Teaching*

The data from this study demonstrated that differences in teaching experience and in professional knowledge gain were not related solely to differences in the context, defined as the type of school, or the capacity of the school to provide support to teachers. These comprised the contextual differences considered in the literature, (for example, Berliner, 2001; Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Reynolds, 1995; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). However, the current study questioned these assumptions about the context of teaching which permeated both the extant international literature about beginning teachers as well as policy and practice in systems and schools in Australia. The data from this study demonstrated that the broader construct of the employment context, and its related components of employment status, the number of schools in which a teacher worked and whether or not a teacher had extensive experience in teaching one class, was critically related to teacher experience and knowledge development.

### *From “context” as school to “context” as employment situation*

The data confirmed the work of researchers such as Berliner (2001) and Bullough (1995) in establishing the role of context in developing beginning teachers’ knowledge. Rich (cited in Berliner, 2001), identified “expertise” in teaching as “an interaction of the person and the environment in which they find themselves” (p. 466). However, this view of the role of the environment or context defined it as “the

organisation of a school and its climate” determined by policies from a range of stakeholders:

These policies subtly, but powerfully affect teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, enthusiasm, sense of efficacy, conception of their responsibilities and teaching practices (p. 466).

This view of the role of the school as the primary educational context in developing teacher knowledge highlighted what many NSW beginning teachers did not experience. Hence, the present data would suggest a redefinition of the construct of “context” to account for the lack of the above quoted school environment, and the substitution of the much broader and more challenging experience of the employment context itself.

#### *Differences in employment contexts*

The research on beginning teacher development commonly cited in the literature (for example, Bullough et al., 1992; Calderhead, 1987) was based on an understanding of beginning teaching as a process located within the context of schools to which teachers were appointed with some security of tenure and within which they accepted responsibility for the learning of a class of students. Australian researchers have made the same assumptions in writing about beginning teaching in this country (Kervin & Turbill, 2003; Khamis, 2000; Kiggins, 2007; Kiggins & Gibson, 2001).

The current study demonstrated that, where contemporary beginning teachers in NSW were located in secure, cohesive and continuing positions in one school, the findings of much of the above research continued to resonate with contemporary experience. However, the data from this study revealed a need to extend this widely accepted view of the context of teaching to accommodate the situation in which a majority of NSW teachers found themselves on graduation from teacher education institutions; that is, coping with the personal and professional exigencies of insecure, fragmented employment, teaching other teachers’ students, and working on the fringes of a number of schools in none of which were they regarded, nor did they regard themselves, as full members.

The data in this study showed that the current understanding of the context in which beginning teachers work and learn could no longer rest on the long-held assumption that they were employed in one school and as teachers of and with their own classes (Bullough et al., 1992; Huberman et al., 1993); beginning teachers represented in the study were employed in a total of eighteen different configurations of employment characterised by varying levels of cohesion (see Figure 7).

### *Levels of Cohesion in Employment Contexts*

The degree of cohesion or consistency in the work situations of survey respondents and case study participants contributed to significant differences in their experience of beginning teaching. Those in situations of low cohesion (see Figure 7) were unable to consolidate learning and their inability to reflect effectively in or on practice (Schön, 1983, 1987) deprived them of a significant form of learning available to those in positions of high cohesion.

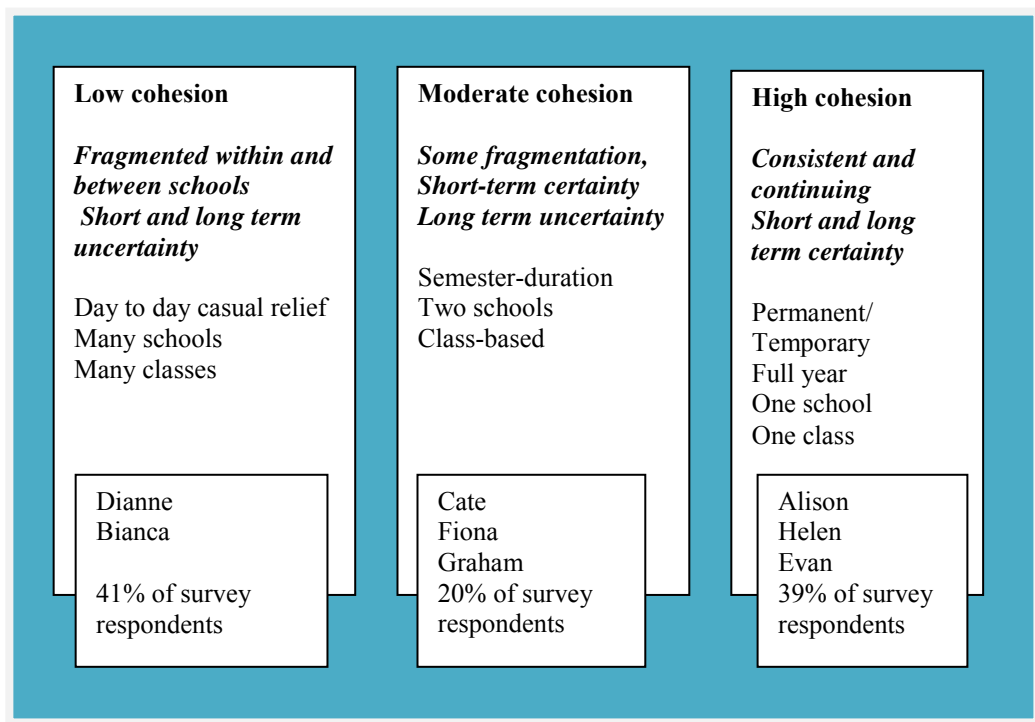


Figure 7 Cohesion in work experience

### *Learning to teach in situations of low cohesion*

Dianne and Bianca, and 41 per cent of survey respondents, were casual teachers throughout their first year of teaching, teaching on a daily or weekly basis, in several

schools and on a variety of classes. These teachers experienced low levels of cohesion (McCormack & Thomas, 2002; Tromans, 2002) (see Figure 7). Both Dianne and Bianca were initially satisfied with the variety provided by casual teaching, but as the experience left them unable to relate to students or staff and unable to remedy the persistent issues arising in their teaching practice, both became disillusioned and considered a change of career. Similar issues were reported by survey respondents who found the uncertainty of casual teaching stressful and unsatisfying.

These issues of difficulty and dissatisfaction were consistently recorded by researchers who considered the experiences of casual (or relief or substitute) teachers in general (Galloway & Morrison, 1994; Webb, 1992). However, this study demonstrated that there were underlying issues of teacher confidence and teacher learning that made casual teaching even more difficult for those with no prior experience of teaching on which to draw. As such, this study confirmed and extended the work of a small number of researchers who have considered the issues of casual beginning teachers in terms of teacher satisfaction (McCormack & Thomas, 2002; Tromans, 2002) by adding in considerations of teacher development.

Teachers working in fragmented employment contexts were least able to view themselves as long term professional teachers and case study participants and survey respondents recorded their need to find other work if a permanent position did not become available. Despite considerable concern in the literature about retention of beginning teachers beyond the three to five year period that now characterises many teachers' career duration (Manuel, 2003), there is little indication of concern for those who leave, disillusioned and disappointed, at the end of 1-2 years.

### *Learning to teach in situations of moderate cohesion*

Cate, Graham and Fiona were all employed at two schools during their first year of teaching and thus had at least two terms of continuous teaching in one school in which to begin to explore and develop their own knowledge of teaching. Similarly, 40 per cent of survey respondents, though classed as casual teachers, had had a series of "long blocks", that is, several appointments of at least one term in length of

continuous teaching. Although this group experienced only moderate levels of cohesion (see Figure 7) they nevertheless noted gains in their knowledge and a more satisfying experience during their teaching. However, the point at which they were required to stop one assignment and begin another was a source of great frustration.

While this group experienced more success as practising teachers than did the previous group, their issue was the difficulty of consolidating knowledge and of needing to “start again” as they moved between schools and found that what they had learned in one school was insufficient or, perhaps, inappropriate, for success in the new context (Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Cowley, 1999). This group’s issues were those of discontinuity in their learning, the need to make frequent adjustments to new situations, students and staff, and the difficulty of consolidating and building on prior knowledge gain.

#### *Learning to teach in situations of high cohesion*

Alison and Helen had received permanent appointments to their schools from the start of their teaching and spent their initial two years of teaching in situations of high cohesion (see Figure 7). Evan, though beginning as a long-term temporary teacher, “grew” into his position and was confirmed in it at the end of his first year. Thirty-nine per cent of survey respondents reported their employment status as permanent at the end of the first year and have therefore been classed here as teachers in positions of high cohesion. The difference in the career trajectory of these participants compared to their colleagues in situations of low and moderate cohesion was highly significant. Permanent teachers were able to experience a relatively continuous progression from initial difficulty to significant level of competence by the end of the first year. As each moved into the second year, confidence was vastly increased and the problems that had occurred during the first year could now be considered and to some extent, prevented by explicit and reasoned adaptations of planning and organization.



(ii) *Findings Related to the Knowledge Base of Teaching*

It was evident early in the research study that the literature concerning the knowledge base of teachers in general, exhaustively researched and described over the past two decades (see Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008; Berliner, 1998; Borko & Putnam, 1996; Bullough, 2001; Elbaz, 1983; Eraut, 1994; Grossman, 1995; Hiebert et al., 2002; Hinde Mcleod, 2000) could profitably be used to begin to investigate the knowledge base of beginning teachers and the perceived changes resulting from one to two years in the profession.

*The Knowledge Base of Teaching in the Literature*

The knowledge base of teaching represented in Figure 8 and developed in this study comprised three interactive, inter-dependent and inter-related “~~k~~nowledges”, each of which has been the source of much research individually. These knowledges are:

- personal practical knowledge of teaching (Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Elbaz, 1983; Ellis, 2007);
- knowledge of the context of teaching (Craig, 1995; Lortie, 1975; Nias, 1986; Zeichner & Gore, 1990); and
- knowledge of self-as-teacher (Boreham & Gray, 2005; Clandinin, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

The data from the study suggested that each domain of the knowledge base was not independent of the others and beginning teachers benefited from concurrent experience in all three. Each domain of the knowledge base was developed by particular professional activities: engagement in the practice of teaching; participation in professional socialisation; and negotiation of professional identity, and the data demonstrated that success in one domain was dependent on success in each of the others. In other words, this study found that the knowledge base of teaching comprised an interactive and interdependent set of “~~k~~nowledges”, each of which required active development in order to activate each of the others. Figure 8 shows the interrelationship which became evident in this study between each of the

domains of teacher knowledge and the professional activities through which each was developed.

In this study the data demonstrated that each of these domains of knowledge was developed iteratively in concert with the development of each of the others. As knowledge of teaching practice increased, self-confidence was developed and professional identity strengthened; as professional identity was strengthened, teachers sought to develop relationships with colleagues; and as they engaged in collegial interaction, practice improved and a stronger sense of self-as-teacher was negotiated as competence and professional membership were acknowledged by others and by self.

### *Beginning Teachers' Knowledge Base of Teaching*

The second finding in regard to the knowledge base of teaching concerned the knowledge base of beginning teachers *per se*. In the literature which specifically described the knowledge base of beginning teachers (for example, Reynolds, 1989, 1992, 1995), what emerged was a perception of a deficit between what experienced educators believed beginning teachers should know, and what they actually demonstrated (Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986; Reynolds, 1995; Veenman, 1984). Reynolds (1995, p. 216), for example, summarised the knowledge of beginning teachers in terms of what they did not know or could not do in relation to more expert teachers. This study demonstrated that, given optimal circumstances, beginning teachers were well able to demonstrate and expand what they did know, and recognise, acknowledge and address what they did not know. In addition, what they did know could be recognised as coming within the scope of the knowledge base of teaching in general as it was described by seminal authors in the area (e.g., Grossman, 1995; Shulman, 1986, 1987). This was demonstrated by the thematic material which emerged from the recounts of experience given by case study participants, and by the responses of survey respondents to items related to the above formal delineations of the knowledge base.

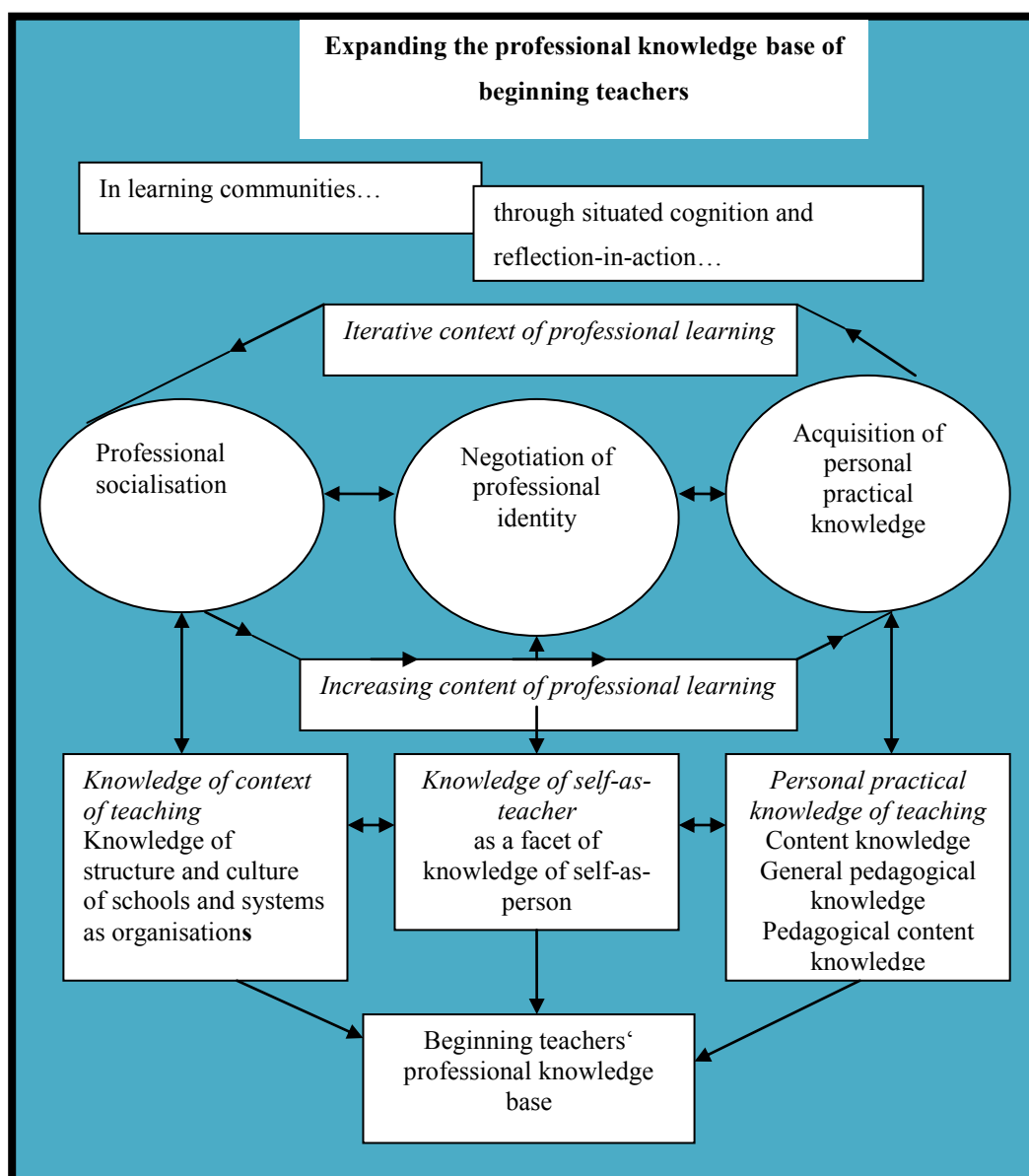


Figure 8 The development of the knowledge base of teaching

Case study participants discussed their experiences in terms similar to those used in describing teacher knowledge in the literature. Although such discussion was not articulated as a set of codified constructs, the formulation of a set of models from participant interview data, represented by nodes or data categories (see Appendix F for naming and numbering of nodes), revealed the extent and depth of teacher knowledge possessed by case study participants in each of the domains of knowledge explored in the study; that is, personal practical knowledge of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher (see Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11).

The models in Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11 represented the way in which interviewees articulated their own knowledge of the separate domains of the knowledge base of teaching. Similarities to schema drawn from Shulman's categorisation of teacher professional knowledge as it was first presented two decades ago and since developed (see Feiman-Nemser & Norman, 2000; Grossman, 1990, 1995; Reynolds, 1989; Shulman, 1986, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999) were evident. The models demonstrated that the knowledge base of participant beginning teachers was not notably deficient when compared with the knowledge base of teachers in general as represented in the literature (Grossman, 1995; Shulman, 1986, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999).

### *Personal practical knowledge of teaching*

Figure 9 represented case study participants' understanding of teaching practice and their concepts of the components of this domain of the knowledge base. These include understanding of the areas which are represented in the survey data; that is, programming, planning and syllabus knowledge, understanding of inclusive practice, and knowledge of teacher–student relationships, as well as the articulation of concepts that relate to both pedagogical knowledge in general and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986).

*Knowledge of the context of teaching*

Knowledge of the context of teaching (Nias, 1986) (see Figure 8) was initially a secondary consideration for participant beginning teachers and teachers began their teaching isolated in their own classrooms, a finding consistent with investigations of beginning teachers in some states in the U.S. (Kardos & Johnson, 2007). This data suggested that, unlike the U.S. situation where teachers believed they were expected to work independently, teachers in this study elected to work independently because of an initial concern about others' views of their competence (Flores, 2006; Waldsorf & Lynn, 2002). As teachers in continuing and cohesive positions began to acquire developing competence in the classroom they acquired also increased confidence in themselves as teachers and a greater preparedness to relate on a personal and professional level to more experienced colleagues on the staff of their school.

Knowledge of the context of teaching was the component of the knowledge base which was quite dramatically different for those in continuing, cohesive contexts and those in uncertain, fragmented ones and the effect on the development of teachers' practical knowledge was similarly differentiated.

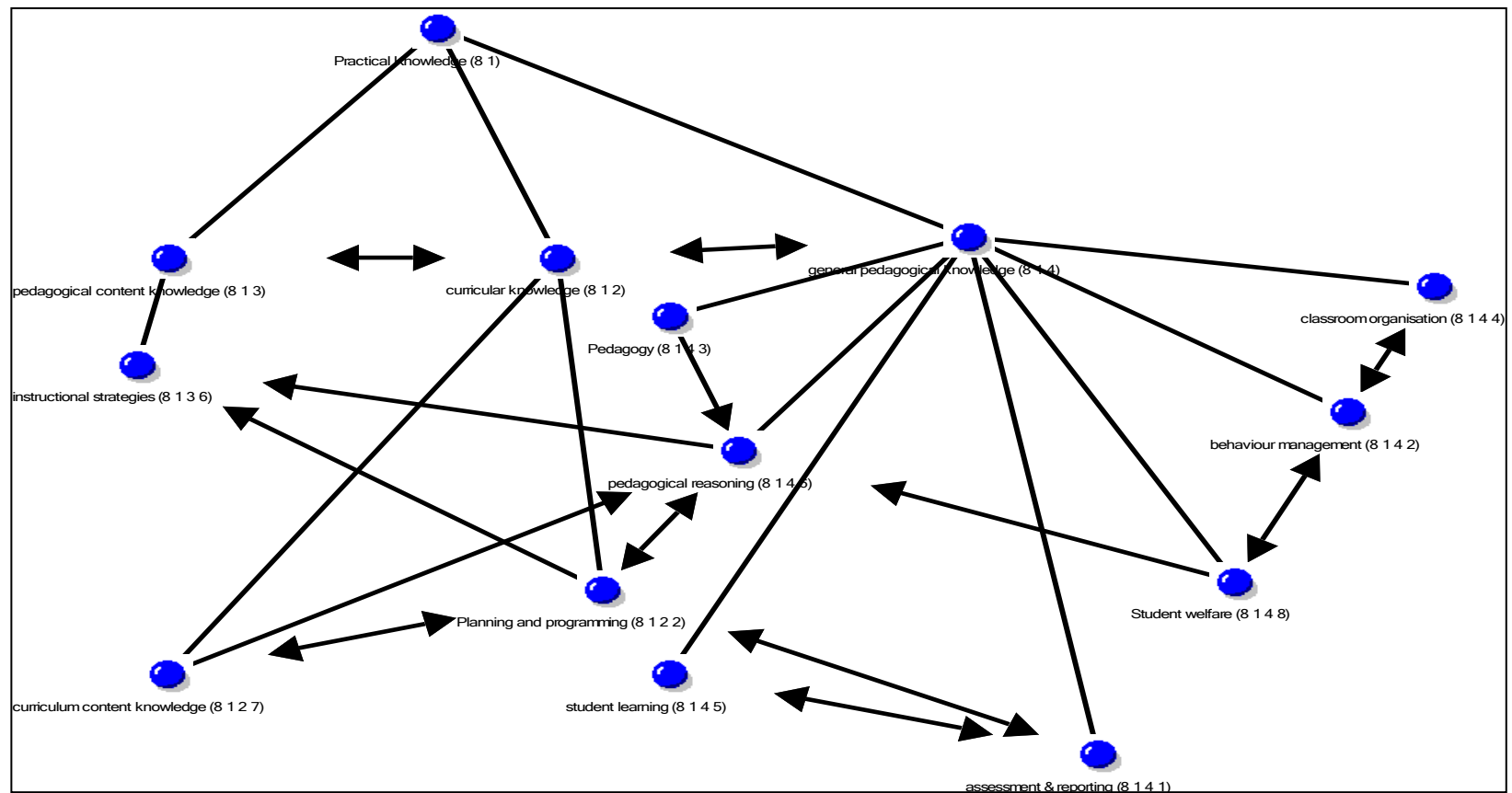


Figure 9 Model of personal practical knowledge

Where teachers could draw on collegial support, they developed greater practical knowledge; where such knowledge was denied them, their capacity to develop their own knowledge base was extremely limited, dependent as it became on reflection about class events in the light of personal ideals of good teaching, usually related to classroom order. The model of knowledge of the context of teaching represented in Figure 10 was constructed from the responses of case study participants and from the nodes used to categorise and code interview data related to —knowledge of schools as social systems” (see Appendix F: List of Project Nodes). This model again demonstrated that the components of contextual knowledge that were acknowledged by case study participants were common to those of the literature on professional socialisation. Similar responses were also identifiable in the responses of survey respondents as they reported their participation in school-based activities (group and individual); their capacity to access support from colleagues and mentors; and their access to formal and informal professional learning opportunities.

Teachers activated this domain of the knowledge base somewhat later than the domain related to practical knowledge. Discussion of the context of teaching and of schools in terms of links with the community of a school, participation in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), membership of a learning community at a school (Baynes, Abbott-Chapman, Hughes, & Williamson, 2000; Shulman & Shulman, 2004), and acknowledgement of the principles of collegial learning during practicums had all been areas studied during the pre-service course. Hence, teachers were aware of the potential value of relating to colleagues but their own uncertainty in terms of their competence limited their capacity to initiate contact. Flores (2006) noted a similar issue of participants who were uncomfortable and, therefore, reluctant to ask for help. It seemed that this component of the knowledge base depended on both of the other domains for its activation: the development of some self-confidence in managing their class and their teaching program; the development of confidence in one or more colleagues; and the development of a somewhat limited and fragile understanding of professional identity as a member of a teaching community of practice.

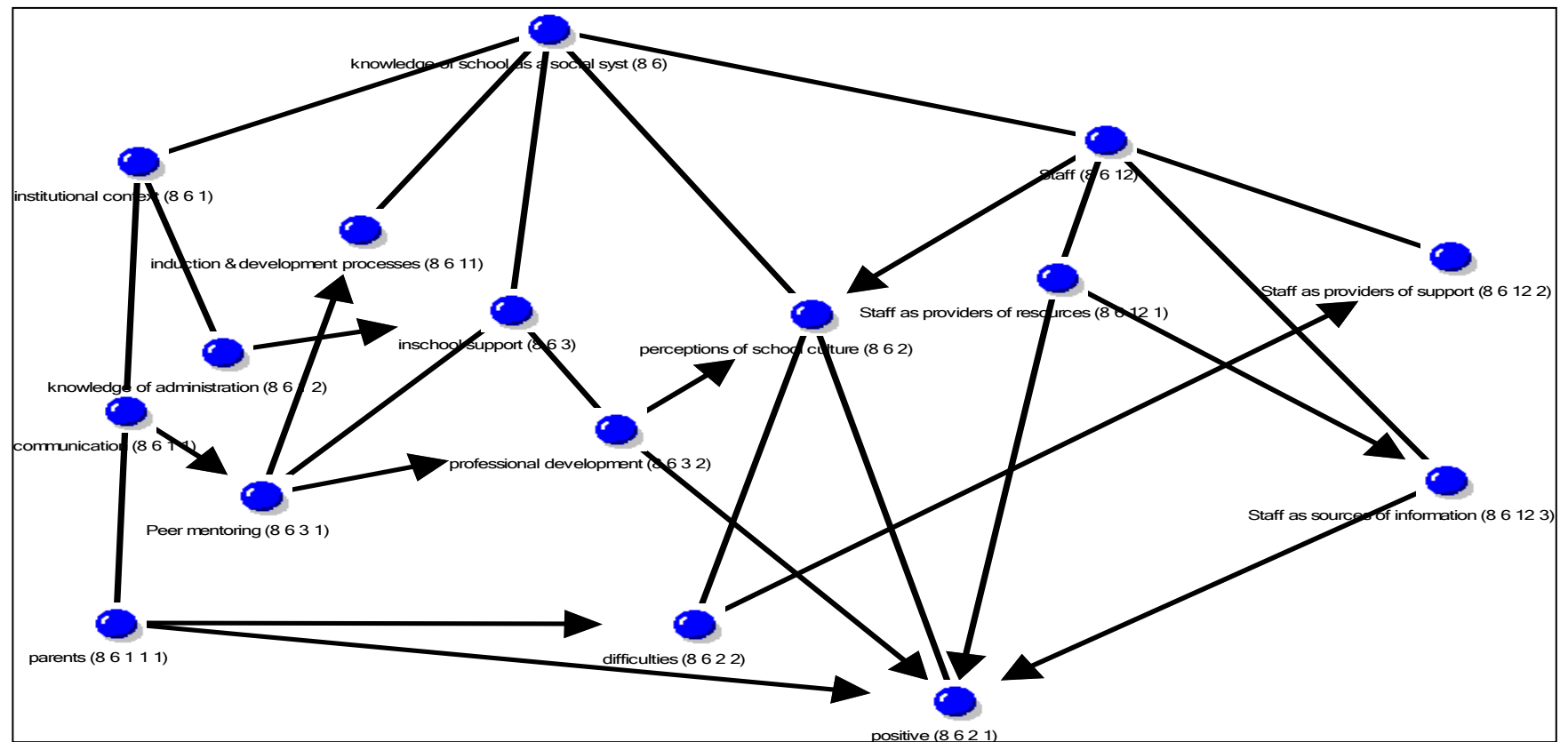


Figure 10 Model of knowledge of context of teaching



*Knowledge of self-as-teacher*

The third component of the knowledge base was the facet of personal identity represented by the emerging professional identity (see Pietsch & Williamson, 2005, for a further discussion of the process of negotiation of professional identity by beginning teachers). Figure 11 showed from the interview data the relationships identified between nodes coded under the heading “Knowledge of self” (see Appendix F: List of Project Nodes). Knowledge of self-as-teacher, the third domain of the knowledge base of teaching and participant responses concerning personal and professional identity were used to construct the model in Figure 11.

According to Connelly and Clandinin (1999), beginning teachers “seek to establish a coherent and integrated professional identity that is consistent with the inner self” (p. 8). This coherence between the professional identity and the “inner self” was one that was reflected in many of the narratives of this research study as teachers struggled with the negotiation and re-negotiation of their professional identity in the light of changing circumstances in both personal and professional lives.

Knowledge of self-as-teacher at this stage rested on identifying the match between beliefs about teaching and often long-held images of teaching and students, with understandings of self-as-teacher, and negotiating a sense of identity and self-worth from within as well as from the recognition and acknowledgement of others.

The strengthening of professional identity was determined to a large extent by the opportunities provided in the work context for the provision of support from the community of practice (Wenger, 1998) such that developing competence was acknowledged by the self and by others.

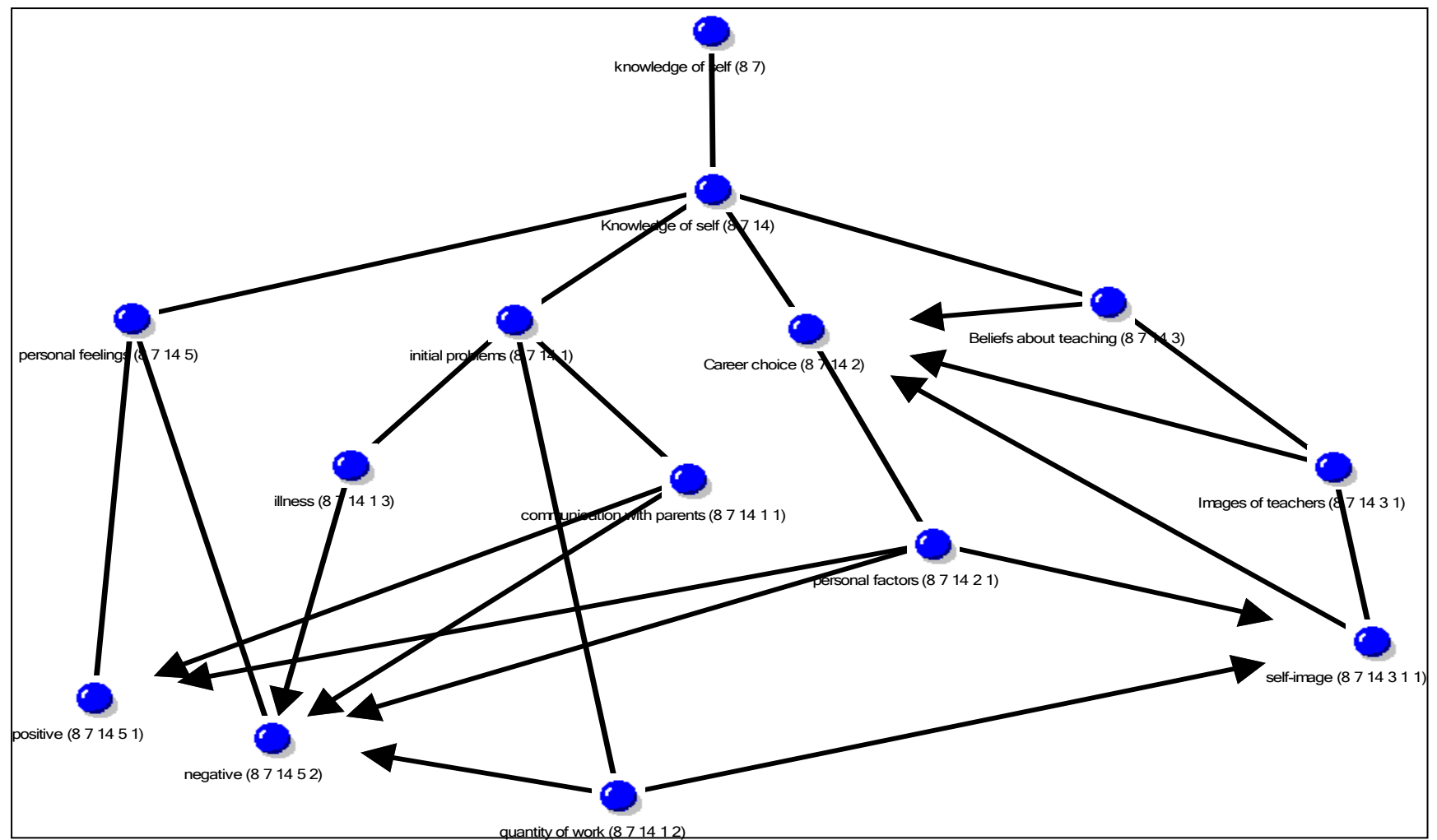


Figure 11 Model of knowledge of self-as-teacher

As professional identity strengthened, teachers initiated contact with others; as others provided support, practical knowledge improved; as practical knowledge improved, a stronger professional identity emerged. When the context disallowed improvement in practical knowledge and when the professional community anticipated by beginning teachers failed to recognise the professional identity of teachers, disillusionment was followed by withdrawal of professional commitment.

In describing their own “knowledge of teaching” in interviews and through the development of three concept maps over the time of the research study, the focus of the beginning teachers represented in this study was initially on planning and programming, behaviour management and classroom organisation, that is, on those areas of knowledge which were immediate and urgent in their application. However, once practical knowledge was consolidated teachers were able to work within the additional domains of the knowledge base to develop knowledge of the context of teaching and knowledge of self-as-teacher.

### *(iii) Findings Related to Experience and Expertise*

Research into professional life cycles represented a teaching career as divisible into time-bounded stages each with differing characteristics of competence and commitment (for example, Huberman, 1989) and linked experience (time-in-teaching) to the development of competence or expertise. Other researchers (notably, Berliner, 1986, 1991, 1994, 1995) explored the nexus between experience and expertise, and devised models that refuted the accepted belief that the number of years spent teaching determined the level of teaching competence. These latter models suggested, instead, that the development of competence and, even more, expertise required time in the classroom, but that time spent teaching was to be regarded as a necessary but not sufficient condition for increasing competence.

Much of the discussion about how beginning teachers learned to teach revolved around the idea that beginning teachers were in a “stage” of career which was characterised by particular knowledge and skills (see Table 7.1). This study affirmed the findings of the research literature that teacher development, at least in the initial stages which were the focus of this study, was characterised by particular knowledge

and skills observable at particular stages of the career cycle (Beattie, 2000; Berliner, 1986, 1991, 1994, 1995; Calderhead, 1987, 1988; Featherstone, 1993; Huberman, 1995; Huberman et al., 1993; Huberman, Thompson, & Weiland, 1997; McCormack et al., 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). The data also confirmed that initial knowledge development was linked to class-based practice over time.

Table 7.1 *Comparison between Two Conceptions of Career Entry Phases*

Researcher	Phase & Duration	Characteristics
Huberman (1989)	Career Entry: Survival and Discovery (1-3 years)	<del>the</del> the gulf between professional ideals and the daily grind of classroom life,” compared with the <del>initial</del> initial enthusiasm of having one’s <u>own</u> pupils; one’s own classroom, materials and yearly program...” (p. 33)
Berliner (1994, 1995)	Novice (Pre-service & first year of teaching)	<del>it</del> it is the stage at which real-world experience appears to the learner to be far more important than verbal information” (1995, p. 47)
	Advanced Beginner (second and third year teachers)	—At this stage experience can be melded with verbal knowledge, where episodic and case knowledge is built up...experience is affecting behaviour but the advanced beginner may still have no sense of what is important...[and may] fail to take full responsibility for their actions.” (1995, p. 47)
	Competent (third and fourth year teachers)	—...they make conscious choices about what they are going to do....while enacting their skill, they can determine what is and what is not important”(Berliner, 1995, p. 48)

### *Beginning Teachers’ Development and the Role of Context*

Early stage models focused on description of the characteristics of each stage rather than explanation of how teachers moved from one stage to the next (Desforges, 1995, p. 388) until Berliner (2001) proposed that the development of pedagogical expertise could be described as a function of “extensive deliberate practice” and context (pp.

465-466). However, the data from the current study also challenged assumptions about the context in which these early models and theories about beginning teachers were researched. Many seemed to arise from studies with very few (or no) participants (Berliner, 1995; Bullough, 1989; Calderhead, 1987; Clandinin, 1986; Krieg, 2010), or with singular methods of data gathering (Bullough et al., 1992; Huntly, 2008). The data from this present study were derived from a multi-method, multi-participant research methodology and expanded this understanding of context by indicating that development required continuing single class-based practice in a cohesive employment context. The data therefore extended the stage theories by identifying one underlying pre-condition which differentiated the contexts in which previous models were developed from the context in which many contemporary novice teachers now enter the profession: employment context.

The data from this study demonstrated that differences in teachers' stages of development could be related to differences in the characteristics of the employment context, and particularly in the opportunities offered by the context for deliberate practice, especially in early career. The comprehensive data obtained from this study showed that employment context led to differences not only in the content of knowledge activated at each stage but also in the impetus and facility to progress from one stage to the next.

### *Stages of Beginning Teacher Development*

The phrase “beginning teachers” and its synonyms—new teachers, newly appointed or newly qualified teachers, early career teachers, novice teachers—are used in a multitude of research contexts but there is rarely any insight provided into how or when teachers reach a stage where they are no longer considered to be “beginning” and what it is that is understood by the education community to divide the beginner from the non-beginner in terms of duration of service or capability. While some researchers (Brown, Doecke, & Loughran, 1997; Bullough, 1989; Bullough et al., 1992) are prepared to discuss “beginning” in terms of teachers who are in their first year in a formal teaching position in a school following their pre-service course, many others use the term without a clear definition of what constitutes the “beginning-ness” of these teachers (Commonwealth Department of Education

Science and Training, 2002). The word “beginning” commonly refers to teachers who are somewhere in their first three to five years in a school, immediately following graduation from a pre-service course, and who are assumed to be of lesser competence than their more experienced colleagues. Occasionally, the term “novice” teacher refers to those who are still in pre-service courses and to the teaching they encounter at this stage through participation in practicums (Borko & Putnam, 1996).

Table 7.1 demonstrated some of the complexity of the discussion about beginning teachers. There has been little agreement on whether or not the career entry stage is one year or more; on the characteristics of the stage; and on the duration of the stage. In addition, there has been little explanatory theory about the process whereby teachers move across the boundaries of stages, even assuming there are defined boundaries. The duration and characteristics of this “stage” were rarely defined, and it was necessary to go back to the early works of Huberman and Berliner to see some conception of boundaries (fluid though they may be) between the stage characteristic of most beginning teachers and that of their more expert colleagues. The longitudinal data in this study showed that the “boundaries” between the early stages of development were permeable and that teachers consolidated different areas of knowledge at different times and hence crossed and re-crossed the putative stage boundaries before firmly establishing themselves in one stage or the other.

In addition, there was little “movement” in the extant models to represent an activity such as classroom teaching that was essentially experienced as dynamic, fluid, unpredictable, and constantly changing, as teachers reflected on and made changes to their practice. It seems likely, on the basis of the data obtained in this study, that the development of teacher competence was a non-linear process with discontinuities prevailing in terms of content and pedagogical development.

These stages, in which participant teachers drew on particular domains of knowledge at particular times, appeared from the data in this study to be reflected in consecutive, time-bound periods, or phases, of growth akin to Berliner’s novice and advanced beginner stages with aspects of the competence stage beginning to appear for those in the most cohesive contexts (Berliner, 1995). This confirmed the literature that the development of competence in novice teachers was closely related to

experience, or time spent in teaching. However, even with novice teachers, experience alone was insufficient as an explanatory mechanism; the context in which they acquired their experience was of greater significance in teacher development than was experience itself and teachers who spent similar periods of time in different employment contexts achieved very different levels of competence.

*Developing competence by participating in cyclic activities*

The duration of each phase of teachers' experience was not simply a matter of time passed; it was related additionally to participation in the in-school cycle of terms and semesters which required repetition of activities such as programming, planning, assessment, reporting and formal contact with parents and colleagues. Where teachers had opportunity to experience "deliberate practice" reflected in responses to formal and informal feedback from induction processes, support from mentors, professional learning and informal support from colleagues from one term to the next in carrying out these activities, they were able to make significant progress in professional skills.

The data from this study suggested that during this extended period of initial learning, consistent experience which at least allowed teachers to experience the first year's cycle of activities was instrumental in enabling teachers to overcome the limitations of the "novice" stage of teaching and begin to approach that of competence. This appeared to require a period of at least two years, but this in itself was a shortening of the views of other researchers who maintained that the novice stage lasted for a minimum of three to five years (see Table 7.1). Time was required to plan, teach, reflect, evaluate, adjust and re-plan but the quality of such teacher thinking was significantly affected by the employment context in which the initial period was spent. Where this two year period was spent in several contexts, the same development of teaching competence was not attained. Where time was spent in a continuing and cohesive teaching situation, processes such as reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983, 1987) enabled the implementation of changes within a continuous cycle of self-improvement, motivated by ongoing development of the professional identity and matching actual teaching practice in the school context to preferred personal teaching models.

Where the teaching situation was sufficiently fragmented so that each event was new and discrete or occurred in a new school or classroom context, it became difficult for beginning teachers to separate those components of the events which were peculiar to the situation and those which related to their own teaching capacity. It thus became difficult for them to acquire the knowledge and skills to move from the “novice” to the “advanced beginner” and “competent” stages (Berliner, 1995).

*Developing competence by reflection on student responses*

Significant learning from the process of reflection was inhibited by the lack of opportunity to revisit the same classroom setting and work with the same group of students and thereby evaluate the effect of changes made by the teacher in response to reflection on student learning. Casual teachers in the survey and the case study expressed their increasing desire as the year went on to teach a class of their “own” students.

It appeared from the data of this research study that it was only in the second year of teaching in cohesive contexts that teachers were able to move beyond the need to organise teaching with only secondary reference to student learning, to a conception of teaching which included the management of teaching with a primary focus on teaching for student learning. The data showed that beginning teachers initially set out to progress their teaching rather than their students’ learning. In doing so, some passed through several distinct phases in their first two years of teaching, which represented their capacity to move from successive focusing on limited components of a number of domains of knowledge as emergent and urgent concerns arose, to the integration of knowledge domains required for a planned and purposeful program designed to progress student learning.

This progress depended on their gaining increasing knowledge of their students. Where the employment experience militated against developing comprehensive knowledge of student learning needs, learning styles and learning abilities, teachers remained focused on the teaching role and became increasingly disillusioned at their inability to make any observable difference to the learning of students.



*Developing competence by building case knowledge*

The data from this research study challenged the commonly held view that teachers acquired knowledge about teaching and developed competence by the supposedly simple act of teaching in a (any) classroom. There was recognition in the literature that development occurred through taking up opportunities to build the case knowledge required to be able to improve pedagogical reasoning and judgement through “extensive, deliberate practice” (Berliner, 2001, p. 465). However, this was predicated on an assumption of the capacity of the teacher to replicate, reflect on and improve teaching performance within a consistent, continuing and cohesive context.

*Phases of Experience and Stages of Development*

The literature on developmental stages of teaching knowledge represented most commonly in the work of Berliner (1986) identified distinct stages of development which were linked to years of experience in the case of novice teachers. The data indicated a need to disturb the nexus between stages of novice teacher development and years of experience. In this study, the data showed that the 3-5 year period from novice to competent teacher, and the duration of the intervening stages, could be shortened or lengthened by the employment experience. This developmental process is represented in Figure 12 which demonstrated the dissonance that occurred between the ongoing reality of the classroom and the beliefs and images teachers had of themselves and their teaching (Desforjes, 1995). This model (Figure 12) suggested that it was this dissonance between idea and actual teaching performance which propelled teachers to seek additional informal or formal learning and that it was this learning which promoted eventual movement across the “boundaries” of each phase.

Figure 12 suggests a model of novice teacher development still based in length of experience (phases) and developmental stages but reflecting the ongoing change in teacher thinking and teacher practice which “pushed” development within the stage and then along the continuum from one stage into the next.

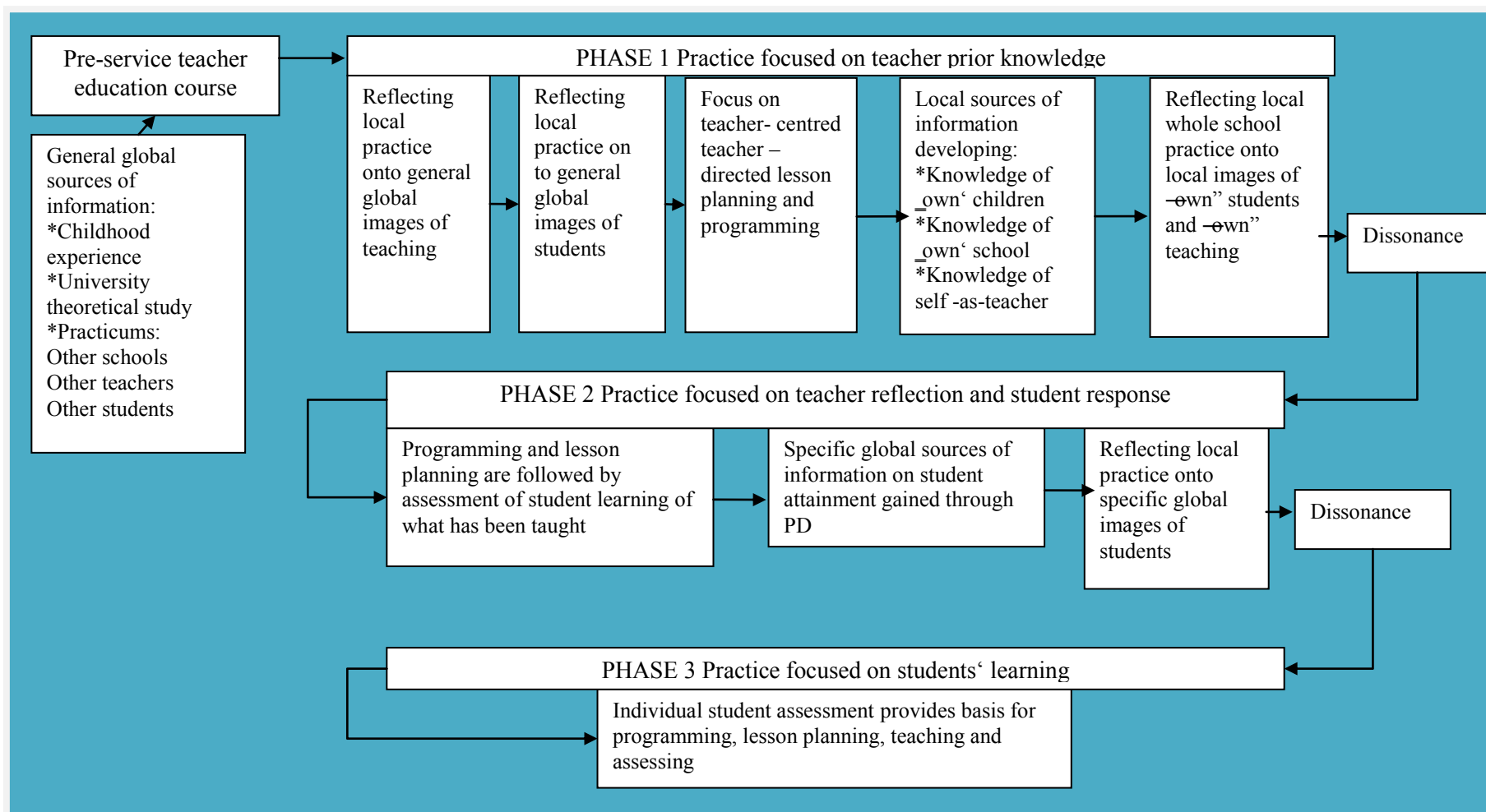


Figure 12 Phases of experience and stages of development: A process model

From this extended model of teacher development, the data in this study indicated that where the employment context interrupted or failed to facilitate this process, providing no consistent classroom context for teacher reflection on events and no adequate sources of additional input or support, development was arrested and teacher knowledge stagnated or even regressed.

*Phase 1: The Novice Stage: Learning in Isolation*

In early Phase 1, represented by approximately the first ten weeks to two terms of teaching, learning in each of the three domains of professional knowledge—context, practical knowledge and identity—was a process in which some aspects of each of these domains of the knowledge base were accessed but where there was little consistent integration of these components. There was sporadic engagement in distinct and often apparently unrelated tasks. Teachers made some cautious contact with colleagues but were unable to access support until development of identity gradually overturned the embarrassment of feeling inexperienced as teachers progressed in this stage.

Development of the knowledge base of the participants at this early stage in their teaching appeared to be restricted by the need to “survive” on a day-to-day basis. The immediacy of needing to “know where I am going” drew each teacher back into information made available in pre-service courses. Most participants addressed this issue of day-to-day survival by planning and programming almost directly from the knowledge brought into the role from university learning such that teaching involved rigid adherence to a plan, constructed with little reference to specific students but with faithful reference to syllabus material and often to “units of work” previously devised at university. In the early weeks of teaching, concern for students was related to the desire for teacher-imposed order in the teaching process and teachers were concerned to ensure that teaching could go on undisturbed. To this end, the aspect of general pedagogical knowledge most often referred to was that of classroom organisation, which included “classroom” management, a term teachers used to refer primarily to the management of student behaviour. Overt control was exercised on student behaviour by processes of classroom management which were again related to teacher prior knowledge, and a repertoire of “tricks and tips”, collected from

observation in other teachers' classrooms and teachers saw good planning and good classroom organisation as preventative strategies, which provided a safeguard against behavioural disruption to the teaching process. Teachers' concerns at this early stage in their professional careers thus centred around gaining control over what to teach and when: planning and programming, that is, translating syllabus outcomes into meaningful units of work to guide teaching practice, took precedence over all other considerations. Broader understandings of pedagogy, matters of subject matter content knowledge and considerations of student learning were subsumed under an apparent all-pervading need to bring a measure of structure and control to the teaching day through having created a program from those aspects of their pre-service education most directly related to day-to-day teaching.

During this phase, engagement in the practice of teaching became the primary focus of attention for the teacher and the task of engaging in socialisation became somewhat peripheral, entered into when necessary or required or when initiated by others. The professional identity was fragile, and often was dependent on the relationship that existed between significant others in the workplace, that is, students, staff and parents. Teaching at this stage tended to be a personal and individual experience related to enacting the teacher's perception of teaching as the central activity of the teacher in isolation in the classroom and to coping with the emerging dissonance between perceptions of what teaching ~~should be~~ and realisation of what, in initial reality, it was.

Only a limited portion of the knowledge base possessed by these teachers at the ~~survival~~ stage of beginning teachers was activated in the initial phase of teaching and this activation tended to occur in isolation. Activation of more of the knowledge base and expansion of its components was accomplished only as teachers became able to ~~let in~~ information from their own classrooms, from colleagues and from formal opportunities (for example, induction processes or appointed mentors) to gain new knowledge which could be used in reflection on current classroom activity. Teachers had developed the capacity to reflect on lessons after the event; what was required in order to progress their competence was the ability to reflect-in-action, and to develop the confidence to approach lessons more flexibly as their classroom

management developed. Berliner (2001) noted the capacity for expert teachers to “be more opportunistic and flexible in their teaching than novices” (p. 476) and it was this increasing flexibility that seemed to be one of the key characteristics that indicated that a teacher was moving from Novice to Advanced Beginner (Berliner, 1986) in knowledge development.

*Phase 2: Moving from Novice to Advanced Beginner: Learning from the Context*

Phase 2 was the stage at which teachers’ levels of knowledge development began to diverge according to the context in which case study participants were placed. This phase appeared to last from the end of at least the first semester of teaching until the end of the first year of teaching where teachers had the opportunity for continuous practice. It was during this phase that the nexus between experience and developing competence appeared to be weakening as teachers in continuing and cohesive situations built on the skills of the first phase and stage, while those in fragmented and uncertain positions moved into Phase 2 in terms of experience but largely remained in the novice stage of development.

Where the second semester of teaching was spent on a different class or in a different school, there was some transfer of the skills learned initially, but frequently there appeared to be a continual re-learning of and a reverting to the priorities of Phase 1 before movement to Phase 2 could be attempted. This second phase was the period during which teachers in continuous practice became more insightful, risking slight relaxation of teacher control at times to allow for student-centred rather than teacher-centred activities. During this second phase, teachers began to recognise some connections between knowledge domains and attempted with varying levels of success to engage in one or other of the professional activities—acquisition of personal practical knowledge, participation in professional socialisation and negotiation of professional identity—as necessary but still separate processes, with significant differences in rates and outcomes of participation. The knowledge base was enhanced by the input of colleagues, to a greater or lesser extent, and by developing identity as a teacher, as teachers in all employment contexts began to receive some recognition as a teacher from other members of the school community and simultaneously developed improved levels of confidence in their own ability to

work in a classroom. Teachers in continuing, secure positions as permanent appointees found the process of teaching demanding but satisfying; those in fragmented situations found it equally demanding, but far less satisfying.

The level of knowledge expansion during this phase was dependent on the extent to which these activities could be engaged in consistently. In particular, identity remained fragile where success in the classroom was limited, where relationships with students or staff were strained by unfamiliarity, and where there was no effective community of practice (Wenger, 1998) to provide input, support and membership as all teachers engaged in the seemingly multiple discrete activities which appeared to comprise teaching at this stage.

The survey-questionnaire gave teachers an option of responding to an item which asked for “any other comment”. Of the 260 responses to this item, 63 (24 per cent) were comments specifically about the level of support (both positive and negative) teachers had received; this topic attracted the largest percentage of responses within this item and indicates the degree to which this mattered to respondents.

Table 7.2 represents the accumulation of knowledge as teachers moved from Phase through to Phase 3 in their teaching journey. It indicated the links between teachers’ professional knowledge base, the professional activities in which teachers engaged and the time phases which were pertinent in the development of early career teachers. This table summarised the data obtained from the current study and broadened understanding of phases and stages of teacher development beyond the characteristics of teacher thinking and behaviour to an understanding of how such changes occurred.

Table 7.2 *Developing Teacher Knowledge during Phases of Teaching*

Developmental processes↓		Engagement in the practice of teaching↓	Participation in professional socialisation↓	Negotiation of professional identity↓
Professional knowledge base		Construction of : content knowledge, knowledge of pedagogy, and pedagogical content knowledge	Construction of knowledge of teaching as social system and self within it	Construction of knowledge of self as teacher
Developmental phases	<i>Phase 1</i> (No linkages; no recognised integration of developmental processes)	Focus on programming and planning and class-based teaching role	Transmission of understanding of elements of school systems and school-based requirements of role (induction programs)	Tentative professional identity awaiting confirmation by self and others
	<i>Phase 2</i> (Weak uni-lateral and uni-directional linkages of processes)	Reflection on own class as part of school and evaluation of teaching beginning to arise from student assessment processes and school-based information	Tentative, formal and informal engagement with others as sources of support, information and resources develops practice and strengthens identity within school.	Weak professional identity: professional self-image depends on acceptance within school and increasing self- and other-perception of control and agency in teaching
	<i>Phase 3</i> (Strong multi-lateral and multi-directional linkages; strong iteration of development)	Reflection on self-efficacy as teacher: reflection on own class re expected global learning outcomes	Reciprocity of engagement	Strong professional identity: personal self-image and professional self-image align

*Phase 3: Approaching Competence: Consolidating Teacher Knowledge*

Phase 3 (the second year of teaching) applied only to the case study and represented a time when some teachers in the case study began to engage in a continuous and iterative cycle of development in which each professional activity and its resultant knowledge domain interacted with and strengthened each of the others. In identifying

this process as an iterative rather than a linear development of Phase 2, the data departed from the literature on the phases and stages of teacher development. By the time teachers had settled into their second year of teaching, especially where this year was in some way a continuation of the first (for example, same school, same grade, and even with some of the same students) they appeared to be actively engaged in assessing at an early stage what it was their new group of students required, and adjusting their planning teaching to fit.

The data from this study showed that after two semesters of teaching, the various work experience contexts of each of the case study participants began to diverge even further, not only in terms of perceived competence and self-confidence, but also in terms of commitment to remaining a teacher. This was related at least in part to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction each was experiencing. The connection between low satisfaction and early career exit was made by McCormack and Thomas (2002) in their discussion of casual beginning teachers but there appeared to be no other research literature which attributed the high rates of attrition of beginning teachers even in part to employment status (e.g., Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Cockburn, 2000; Manuel, 2003; Skilbeck & Connell, 2003).

In this study, three permanent teachers (Alison, Cate and Helen) were joined in permanency by Evan when he was appointed to his position on a permanent basis at the end of his first year. These teachers remained in the same schools and anticipated building on the knowledge developed in Phases 1 and 2. The schools in which they were placed invested time in them with each having access to both formal and informal induction processes, formally appointed or informally available mentors and encouragement to participate in professional learning both within and outside the school. Although initially all three were reticent about participating in the wider life of the school, by the end of the year all had contributed through their own interests and skills to the school's activities. By the end of the first year, all three were intending to stay in teaching despite initial doubts, and were beginning to plan actively and rationally for new classrooms, programs and students in the following year.



During the second year in schools, Alison and Evan were working in their classrooms with a far greater degree of flexibility. They were able to manage the emergent issues of their classroom without substantial interruption to teaching and learning, and were confident in their assessment of students. Both appeared far more relaxed with their classes, more able to see where they had come from and where they were going in terms of their programming and were embedded in their schools as highly valued members of staff. Where both had expressed doubts about their competence as teachers during their first year of teaching, and had been reliant on others for new strategies, there was far greater self-efficacy expressed in the second year and a greater repertoire of strategies to draw on to resolve issues independently. They had built significant case knowledge during the first year and were able to draw on it in the second.

Alison and Evan (and, to a lesser extent, Cate) had opportunity to draw on the experience of one full year and carry it into the next. They were thereby able to demonstrate that they had reached beyond the standing of novices, and even of advanced beginners, and into that of increasingly competent teachers as case knowledge, reflection and support built personal and iteratively developed schemas of good teaching.

Of the casual teachers, Graham and Dianne both elected to withdraw from teaching in NSW and travel to London, Graham to a secondary teaching position and Dianne to look for other work at the end of the first year. Bianca, having been required to stabilise her financial position by taking other casual work (in the separate areas of retail and adult education) found herself with correspondingly less opportunity for teaching while Fiona returned to the uncertainty of casual teaching in her home town. Phase 3, as a phase of approaching competence, appeared to be entered only by those teachers who had opportunity to replicate some of the first year's experience; that is, with a class at a similar level, and in the same school. It represented for only half the original group of case study participants a stage akin to Berliner's "Competent" stage (Berliner, 1995) where teachers were able to be rational and self-monitoring, and made conscious choices about what they were going to do in terms of curriculum, timing and instructional activities based on the prior year's experience.

Cowley (1999) demonstrated that relocation without support could result in initial loss of teaching knowledge and skills, especially where there was insufficient support provided. For teachers in this study who remained in casual teaching positions and whose frequent relocation was an issue in terms of continuity of development and loss of collegial support, experience was seen as non-cumulative: ~~it~~ “really did feel like I was starting again” (Fiona, casual teacher when presented with her second teaching assignment located in a new school). In order to ~~feel~~ “like a teacher” at this stage, Bianca still relied heavily on the preparation made by the teacher she was replacing; coming into a class ~~old~~ “at this stage still left her feeling unorganised, unprepared and lacking in both confidence and competence.

At this stage, teachers in continuing and single school contexts were able to draw on the known expertise and experience of colleagues, and on their own established understandings of and relationships with them in a purposeful way to meet their own requirements for establishing new classes; similarly, they were able to contribute to the requirements of others by sharing knowledge of the students they were ~~sending~~ “on” to other teachers. Acting as both ~~learner from~~ “and ~~teacher of~~” colleagues enabled teachers to develop knowledge, understanding and skills about teaching and to consolidate their identity as competent and well-regarded teachers in this, the second year of teaching.

The following section of this chapter continues with the presentation of major findings related to the contributing Research Questions outlined in chapter 1.

#### *(iv) Findings Related to Research Question 1*

What changes in teacher knowledge were reported by beginning teachers in the first two years of teaching?

This research question was designed to examine the changes in the knowledge base reported by both survey respondents and case study participants. The professional knowledge base of teachers in this study was redefined to include an amalgam of knowledge of the practice of teaching, knowledge of the context of teaching, and knowledge of self-as-teacher and changes were reported by all participants in the

study, whether survey respondents or case study participants. However, the study data revealed significant differences in the content and the process of knowledge change reported by beginning teachers in each of the component areas of the knowledge base of teaching, arising from differences in employment circumstances. For some teachers, the change process was one of almost continuous growth; for others, there was early growth which stagnated as fragmented teaching assignments militated against further development.

### *Teachers' initial professional knowledge base*

The data contained in the set of concept maps and associated commentary (see Appendix D) produced by each case study participant, together with the results of the survey-questionnaire, and the classroom observations made by the interviewer based on her own professional experience, suggested that all participants had a sound professional knowledge base arising from successful completion of the university's course in primary teaching. All teachers' qualifications had been approved by the NSW Department of Education and Training and all had demonstrated effective practical teaching skills at least once each year in the course of their study. The data from this investigation into contemporary beginning teachers in NSW demonstrated that the knowledge base in itself was not in deficit as Reynolds (1995) suggests; what was required was opportunity to distil from the knowledge base what was needed for successful practice through the lived experience of teaching.

### *The dynamic nature of teachers' knowledge base*

The data in this study indicated that the knowledge base was not, as suggested by the literature (e.g., Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Grossman, 1995; Hiebert et al., 2002; Reynolds, 1989), a static body of knowledge held by all practising teachers but was rather a changing set of knowledge, understandings and skills. Berliner (2001, p. 466) in discussing the development of teacher expertise stated that "it is probably the power of context followed by deliberate practice, more than talent, which influences a teacher's level of competency". The data from this study confirmed the contention of Berliner that context and practice made competency. This study suggested a further nuance: that the knowledge base of teaching was dynamic and as such could

be augmented or diminished by the degree to which the employment (as distinct from the school) context facilitated ongoing active, reflective, sustained and supported practice.

All participant teachers in this study (whether in the case study or as survey respondents) reported some gains, regardless of employment circumstance which suggested that even in less than optimal conditions in the workplace, teachers gained from practising even a limited range of teaching skills. The difference in attainment, however, in terms of the skills developed and the integration of complex sets of knowledge and skills was clearly related to the degree to which the initial employment context facilitated “deliberate” practice over extended periods of time. Teachers reported their propensity to activate their pre-service knowledge on a regular basis in the initial stages of teaching. What emerged, however, was the realisation that sustaining and developing the comprehensive knowledge base possessed by beginning teachers’ on exiting pre-service teaching required continuing supported practice together with opportunity for effective reflection on action (Schön, 1983).

#### *Activation of beginning teachers’ knowledge base*

Initially, teachers in all employment contexts activated those parts of the knowledge base which assisted them to meet emergent and urgent problems of what to teach and how to teach it, namely knowledge of lesson planning and classroom management. However, as the urgency abated, teachers were able to approach their teaching and utilise their knowledge more deliberately. This abatement of urgency was limited for those whose work was in continually changing schools and classrooms. In addition, as these teachers moved from class to class and from school to school, the opportunity to reflect and regroup, replan and implement improvement was generally denied them.

It was the contention of this study that the key to development by deliberate activation of the knowledge base resided in the employment circumstances of teachers. The data showed that activation of areas of teacher knowledge other than the initial focus on lesson planning and classroom management, and improvement in

initial planning, programming and management occurred as teachers engaged in classroom teaching. In continuing and cohesive, class-based, single school employment teachers had opportunity to practise, reflect, adjust, and re-construct their knowledge; however, in uncertain and fragmented circumstances, that which was not of immediate use in meeting day-to-day urgency atrophied and eventually became a lost skill.

### *Changes in Personal Practical Knowledge of Teaching*

All teachers began with a focus on some aspects of personal practical knowledge but knowledge and skill development was dependent on circumstances which allowed both confidence and automaticity (see Berliner, 2001, p. 474; Leinhardt & Greeno, 1986, p. 76; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995, p. 13) to develop such that additional (and often more significant) aspects of the knowledge base could be brought to the surface, acted upon and in turn embedded in day-to-day practice. Data from this study supported the work of Berliner (1995) in relation to the characteristics of the initial stage of teaching, that is, the stage which Berliner identifies as the “novice” stage. This was the stage at which Berliner posited that teachers were deliberate and self-centred, focusing on task elements, rules and recipes.

At this stage teachers in this study initially focused on implementing their teaching program within a classroom organised for their security and were, in some sense, constrained and isolated by their own need to control their own classroom. Digital images of teachers’ and students’ work (unpublished) during the first semester showed that there was heavy reliance on daily written lesson plans and limited compilation of longer term programs derived from what teachers knew of syllabus content and teaching strategies. In implementing these plans, there was observable teacher uncertainty and reluctance about whether or not and how to vary from these.

This aspect of teachers’ practical knowledge confirmed much of what was reported in the literature. Teachers were often forced to vary lessons and change plans; but for the teachers in this study, their initial reaction to emergent events was a sense of disappointment and, consequently, a failure to recognise that flexibility, adaptability

and responsiveness to students all need to become part of effective planning (Berliner, 2001, p. 475; Reynolds, 1992, p. 9).

As issues or concerns emerged in the course of day-to-day teaching, participating teachers employed a variety of strategies. However, these were often drawn from the examples of practical teaching that had been presented to them by their school-based mentor teachers during their professional experience practicums. These strategies were incorporated into a trial-and-error process to resolve emergent issues in student behaviour and in the establishment of classroom and administrative routines. This tendency of novice teachers to be menu-driven in their choice of strategies and their limited capacity for reasoned problem solving were factors which indicated the lack of depth of pedagogical reasoning and again confirmed the findings of much of the literature on beginning teachers (see Berliner, 1994, 1995; Feiman-Nemser & Norman, 2000).

By the end of the first year, where teachers had the benefit of supportive socialisation, they were beginning to look beyond their own classroom to those of colleagues. From this they were able to incorporate additional changes to their knowledge base. This occurred as teachers developed knowledge of other classes, other students and other teachers and worked towards building their own case knowledge from reflection on their own work, often in the light of formal professional learning, and from observation of other teachers.

This change in knowledge was reflected in a “loosening” of the structures initially put in place to preserve teacher control and feelings of security in the classroom. This loosening of control allowed for more effective input into planning and programming from other teachers and particularly from assessment of their own students’ progress.

*The effect of employment circumstances on change in practical knowledge*

Employment circumstances, rather than the “important contextual differences, e.g., school cultures, students’ developmental levels” identified by Reynolds, (1995, p. 212) appeared from the data to have priority in determining whether or not beginning teachers were able to activate and make changes to their personal practical

knowledge of teaching. Teachers with continuing classes had greater opportunity than those in fragmented situations and were able to establish an increasingly satisfactory level of agency within their classroom. This enabled them to begin to respond to the complexity of classroom events, and in doing, so they developed an increasing awareness of the need for continuity, sequencing of learning and for teaching which targeted student learning needs.

*Extending teacher practical knowledge beyond the first year*

In open responses to the survey item, Question 15: *In my second year I would like to learn more about...*, there were significant differences in the responses of teachers in different employment contexts in terms of their perceptions about the next stage of knowledge growth. Permanent teachers, that is, those whose experience in the first year had been continuing and cohesive, in one school and on their own class and who could anticipate ongoing teaching in the following year, were concerned with being better able to meet individual student needs within their classrooms. Survey respondents who had remained casual teachers in uncertain and fragmented teaching situations identified programming, assessing and behaviour management as areas they would like to acquire in the second year of teaching. These teachers, who had no expectations from others that they would plan beyond the immediate future and therefore had neither need nor opportunity to increase skills in programming, assessing and reporting, were still looking to these skills as areas for development.

Programming, assessing and reporting were all areas that permanent teachers had encountered at least four times in their first year. These teachers were less inclined than their counterparts in uncertain and fragmented employment to identify these areas as learning priorities for the second year of teaching but rather expressed a realisation of the need for greater knowledge in their understanding of how students learn.

Teachers in continuing and cohesive positions at the end of this, the first year of teaching, although still concerned to improve programming and assessing, were far more concerned with learning how to program for students with learning differences and with improving their knowledge of and skills in inclusive practice. Survey

respondents who were permanent teachers typically gave the following responses to Question 15: *In my second year of teaching I would like to learn...*

More about working with behaviourally challenged students (SR310406).

To modify and adapt my teaching strategies to meet the needs of individual students (SR040301, Permanent teacher).

How to cater effectively for all the children in my class (SR300701, Permanent teacher; emphasis in original).

Teaching students who don't fit the norm e.g., G&T, Special Education (SR370401, Permanent teacher)

This distinction was reinforced by case study participants when Alison, Cate, Evan and Helen as teachers of their own classes within one school throughout their first year responded in the second interview almost entirely in relation to the nature and needs of particular children in their classes. For Fiona and Graham who had had two class-based teaching assignments in different schools there was some discussion of particular children but still a focus on teacher-centred understandings of their classrooms. For Bianca and Dianne there was a continuing concern with the circumstances of their changing situations and no reference to particular students by name and need except for the realisation that not knowing students contributed to the difficulties of casual teaching. Interviews with teachers during Phase 3 of the study were typified by detailed knowledge of students in response to digital images of classroom events. In these interviews, participants expressed a concern for where students (by name) were ~~up~~ to" in contrast to the first interviews which were focused on what the teacher had done.

The data in this study identified a significant link between opportunity to work in a cohesive employment context and effective reflection and learning based on knowing students as learners. In identifying this connection between employment context, knowledge of students and general teacher knowledge development, these data are unique.



*Changes in Knowledge of the Context of Teaching*

As teachers in continuing and cohesive positions developed confidence in their capacity to participate in the wider school activities and community they were able to access the expertise of colleagues and the physical and personal resources of the wider community. This enabled them to increase their knowledge, not only of the physical and human resources in the context itself, but also of the contribution the context could make to their practical knowledge. Their capacity to work with the complexity of content and pedagogical knowledge gradually improved as they acquired knowledge of a range of in-school opportunities to find and use new resources, to practise new skills, and to enter into relationships which assisted them to reflect on their own teaching and to develop new strategies.

*Changes in Knowledge of Self-as-Teacher*

As teachers engaged in teaching, whether in casual or permanent employment situations, their understanding of themselves as teachers developed and they reported changes in their ongoing commitment to teaching, to their students and to teaching as a career. For some teachers, knowledge of self-as-teacher confirmed their decision to become a teacher; for others, the success of their first year led to reassessment of their previous tentative commitment to teaching as a long-term career; and for others who had had less success, the experiences of the first year led to disillusionment with and withdrawal from teaching.

Across the two years of the research study, the consolidation of the beginners' self-knowledge was significantly affected by their experience. To the extent that teachers developed their practical knowledge and a place in schools, their sense of self-worth as a teacher consolidated. The literature acknowledged that developing self-confidence in their own ability was important in confronting the professional isolation that teachers often retreated into when their self-belief was challenged by their experience (Khamis, 2000).

*(v) Findings Related to Research Question 2*

What personal and professional factors may have contributed to differences in teachers' experience of beginning teachers?

Differences in knowledge about the practice of teaching, about the context of teaching and about self-as-teacher arose in the course of the first two years of teaching. Some of these differences were the result of personal attributes (for example, age, gender, previous work experience and qualifications) and some the result of professional circumstances (for example, location, employment status, number of schools and class-based experience) outlined in chapter 4. Analysis of the survey resulted in the identification of a range of personal attributes—age, gender, qualifications, prior work experience—and a range of professional circumstances—school location, teacher status, extent of class-based employment and the number of schools in which teachers were employed—which characterised the beginning teachers in this study. These differences suggested that the construct of “beginning teachers” required reworking to allow for the fact that beginning teachers were not a homogeneous group and their differences in personal and professional circumstances required acknowledgement if schools and systems were to better meet their needs.

Differences in teachers' personal circumstances resulted in a few often relatively minor influences on the development of a teacher's knowledge base; far more significant effects were observed because of the differences in the professional circumstances of teachers. Of the professional circumstances considered in this study, those relating to employment status, the number of schools in which teachers were employed and the extent to which their experience was gained on a class of their own were of greatest significance, both in terms of the meaning for teachers, and in terms of formal statistical significance.

It was here that this research study addressed an area which has received very little attention in the extant literature. Although there have been occasional studies which considered the professional circumstances embedded in casual teaching and the effects on new teachers in Australia (see McCormack & Thomas, 2002; Tromans, 2002), most of the literature on casual /relief /substitute teaching dealt only with the

issues of day-to-day practice rather than with the issue of knowledge loss. In addition, most made little or no distinction between those who had prior teaching experience or a recognised level of teaching competence and those who were learning to teach in this circumstance (Webb, 1992; Williamson et al., 1995).

Similarly, there was very little literature available, other than Bullough and Baughman's classic work (Bullough & Baughman, 1995) which dealt with the effects on beginning teachers of changing schools, and the consequent inaccessibility of those aspects of professional socialisation which were critical to beginning teachers' knowledge consolidation and expansion: induction, mentoring and professional development. There was also no literature available which dealt with the effects on teacher identity of grieving for a long-anticipated class which casual teachers did not and could not have. It was in an attempt to rectify this —blindness" within the literature to the realities of beginning teachers' experience in NSW that the value of this study resided.

Teachers required stability within one school, access to a class of their own and security of tenure at least into their second year if they were to sustain continuous improvement. Teachers who were placed in highly cohesive situations, that is, in permanent and secure positions, continuing into the second year in one school and with responsibility for a class of their own in both years made significant and continuing improvement to their knowledge base throughout the two years. Their practice was characterised by resilience, perseverance and professional satisfaction.

Where the context of employment was moderately cohesive, for example, teachers were employed for a limited time (at least a term) on one class and in one school, some gains were made within the first school experience; however, these gains were lost when adjustment of practice was required too soon in the second teaching assignment. Progress for these teachers was a stop-start process where there was a tendency to begin again without necessarily having the experience to carry through from one situation to the next.

Those whose experience was the least cohesive, for example, day-to-day casual work in many schools and many classes, sometimes even within the one day, remained

menu-driven, unable to make significant professional progress and at most risk of leaving the profession entirely. In this respect, the combination of professional circumstances was an almost overwhelming source of dissatisfaction which could not be redressed by the occasional evidence of successful teaching.

The first year of teaching was for many teachers a time when the task of learning to teach appeared to be an overwhelming experience as they attempted to adjust to the practical requirements of induction into schools, systems and the profession (McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Williams, 2002). For those who were appointed to permanent positions to teach classes within schools where collegial support was provided, the difficulties of developing their own practical knowledge of teaching were ameliorated through participation in a process of professional socialisation. For those excluded by virtue of their experience as casual teachers, working in more than one school and without the satisfaction of getting to know their “own” class, opportunity to develop as a teacher was significantly constrained. Figure 13 presents a diagrammatic representation of the different effects of initial employment experience on in-service experience and represents schematically the findings in response to Research Question 3.

#### *(vi) Findings Related to Research Question 3*

How did differences in teaching experiences affect teachers’ development of their knowledge base of teaching?

The data from the present study reflected a need for expansion—or the inclusion of more nuance—of the models or stage theories which constituted much of the most cited theoretical research on how teacher knowledge was developed. The results of this investigation challenged the view of teachers’ progression through consecutive phases linked approximately to years of experience (Berliner, 1986; Grossman, 1995; Huberman et al., 1993) in that they demonstrated unequivocally that teachers could reach beyond the “Survival and Discovery” and the “Advanced Beginner” stages well within three years, given appropriate experience-in-context. By contrast, given inappropriate initial employment experience, few will progress beyond the “novice”

stage until appropriate experience becomes available, regardless of the length of experience.

A number of authors have identified specific processes in addition to classroom practice—induction, mentoring and professional learning (Feiman-Nemser & Norman, 2000; McCormack et al., 2006)—as the primary vehicles through which teacher knowledge is developed. The effect of a supportive context on teachers' development is undisputed and has been the subject of much research (Berliner, 2001; Bullough, 1997; Bullough et al., 1992; Cheng & Pang, 1997; Street, 2004; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) describe the effect of participation in collaborative cultures in the following terms:

In these cultures, teachers develop common purposes, cope with uncertainty, respond to rapid change, create a climate of risk-taking, and develop stronger sense of self-efficacy (p. 51).

There is strong advocacy in the above cited research literature for devising contextual supports for beginning teachers through induction, mentoring and professional development as a means of preventing attrition and consolidating commitment and acknowledgement of the detrimental effects on beginning teachers of the lack of a supportive culture. While the data in this study reiterated the value of collaborative cultures in teacher development, they also showed the consequences for many teachers when they were unable to access such cultures. It was this latter finding that had little representation in extant literature and hence, there is a need to extend this literature to take into account the lack of access to these processes for teachers in fragmented employment contexts.

#### *Developing the knowledge base: The role of induction*

New teachers, unlike new members of other professions, typically assumed the same responsibilities for the education of children from their first day in the profession as did their colleagues who had been teaching for many years. The responsibility for “inducting” these teachers into the profession and the practical craft knowledge required to perform well in the profession lay with experienced teachers in schools and with system providers of professional development (McCormack & Thomas,

2003; Tickle, 2000; Turner, 1994). The success of induction programs rested on coherence with the work of pre-service education performed by universities and the capacity of schools to understand the process of induction as a process of continuing learning, building on rather than replacing the knowledge developed in pre-service courses. In the implementation of successful induction, mentors played a critical role (Kervin & Turbill, 2003; McCormack & Thomas, 2003).

Induction programs together with mentoring (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) tended to be the formal mechanisms by which early career teachers were socialised into the profession and through which they acquired the additional knowledge, skills and evidence of successful practice in the context of a particular school on which the development of professional identity depends. Informal socialisation, which was often the pathway into the hidden culture of school and profession, was a more haphazard process, relying as much on informal contacts and networks as it did on formal programs (Kardos et al., 2001). In much of the literature, induction and mentoring were considered to be two facets of the one program; however, in many schools, teachers reported access to formal and informal collegial mentoring without access to formal induction programs; or access to formal induction programs of limited value and duration and no access to mentoring.

*Developing the knowledge base: The role of mentoring*

Reconceptualising both induction and mentoring to serve the needs of beginning teachers required re-thinking the process of professional socialisation so that it provided opportunity for beginning teachers to obtain necessary contextual knowledge but did not —[e]duce] them away from the purposes and practices they recently acquired in their teacher preparation experiences” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 53).

The results of this study indicated that where teachers worked in less than optimal school contexts, that is, where they worked in more than one school, in insecure and fragmented positions, and without access to continuing responsibility for student learning or collegial support, induction, mentoring or professional learning, their

development appeared to be arrested at the “novice” or “survival” stage of competency irrespective of the length of time spent in classrooms.

Case study data revealed the importance of this aspect of mentoring as a key to teacher development. Initially reluctant to ask for help, participants who were offered support found it invaluable in assisting them to rework their understandings of school and classroom. For example, Evan gradually came to rely on his mentor, to seek advice and support, and to respond to the skilled coaching that this teacher offered. As his knowledge of and confidence in both the mentoring relationship and the person in the mentor role developed, Evan was able to utilise the relationship to increase his knowledge of both context and of teaching practice.

*Developing the knowledge base: The role of informal collegial support*

The role of collegial support in effecting development within this aspect of the knowledge base, and the effect of such development on the continuing improvement in practical knowledge and knowledge of self was vital. The research literature on the process of socialisation has moved in recent years to a discussion on the value of such mechanisms as induction (Clark & Antonelli, 2009; Corbell, Reiman, & Nietfield, 2008; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Tickle, 2000; Turner, 1994), mentoring (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Pearson, 2002; Street, 2004) and professional development (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). However, much of the research is concerned also with identifying the deleterious effects of not having access to these processes (Flores, 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2003). It therefore resonated with the reported experience of permanent beginning teachers in this study whose experiences of induction and mentoring were limited by the inadequacies of induction policies and practices in the schools in which they worked. However, it resonated even more strongly with the experiences of those who were unable to access them, even where they were available, by virtue of the employment experience in which they were placed. The prior research was undertaken exclusively with teachers located in schools as class-based teachers; the data in this study showed that the negative issues identified were multiplied for those teachers who were yet to be appointed as permanent teachers to one school and who were therefore not working in a continuing position and on their own class.

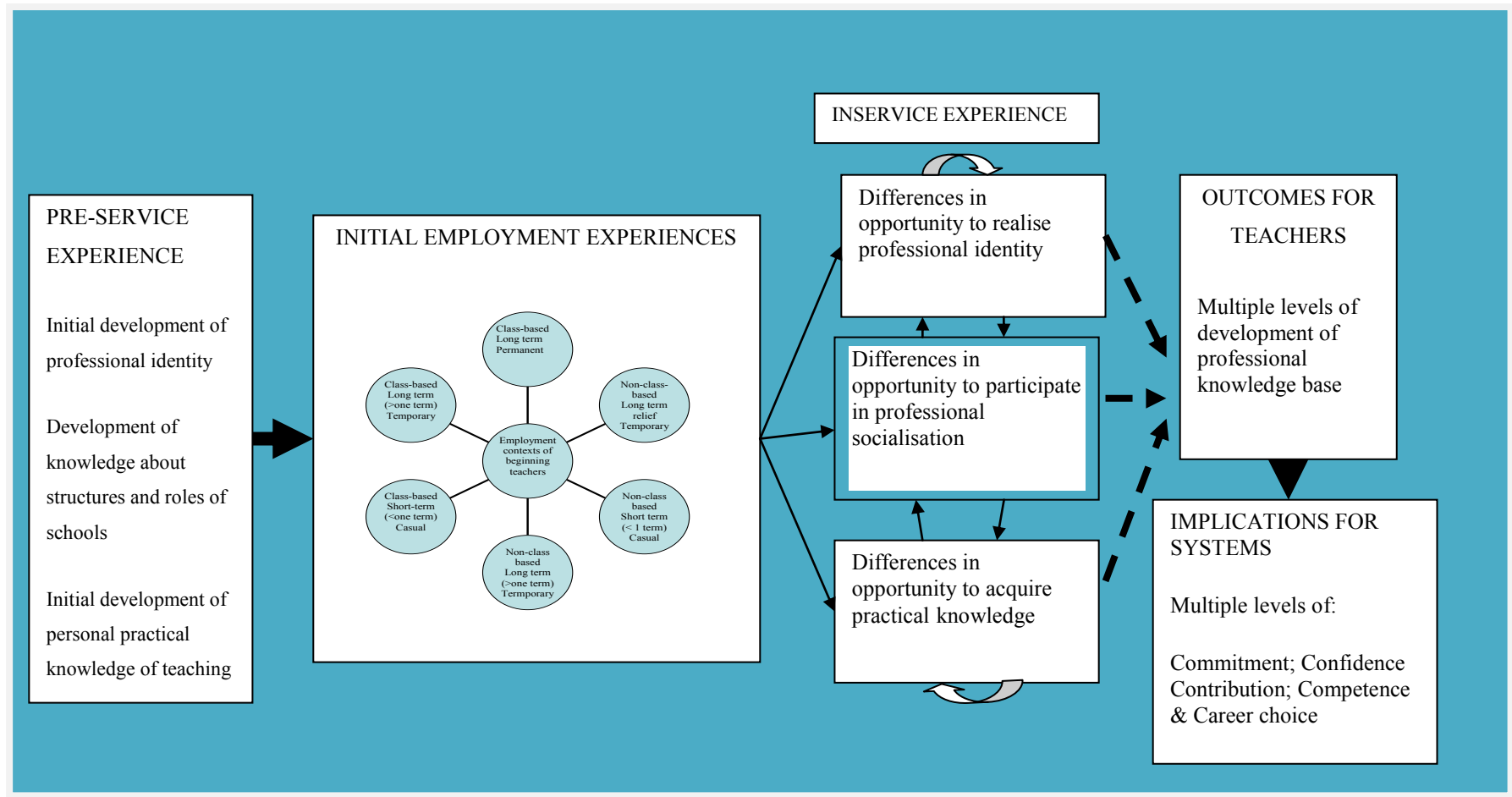


Figure 13 Differentiated experience: Effects on teachers and systems



The lack of such opportunity became a major issue for casual teachers once the initial phase of teaching had passed and teachers' own resources for remedying the concerns of their teaching day were exhausted. Casual teachers were unable to develop adequate knowledge of each school they visited even for day-to-day functioning and for most casual teachers the school context was not a source of ongoing professional learning.

*Developing the knowledge base: The role of professional development*

Access to professional development was both a form of professional socialisation and a link between socialisation, the development of knowledge of the context of teaching, and the development of practical knowledge of teaching. Professional development promoted both domains of knowledge, and contributed simultaneously and iteratively to the development of professional identity (Wenger, 1998). Access to professional learning opportunities was a key factor in increasing a teacher's practical knowledge, and demonstrated the degree of support provided by the school and the system for a teacher's individual professional development. In New South Wales, schools held funds to enable staff to access professional development provided by the local school or the system. Where teachers had no school to which they "belonged," their access to knowledge of and funding for attendance at professional development courses either within or outside schools was non-existent.

During 2003-4, professional development activities, whether provided within or outside schools, provided teachers with opportunity to extend their knowledge of both syllabus and pedagogy. In 2003, primary teachers across the state were grappling with a range of recently introduced syllabus changes, a new mathematics syllabus and a new pedagogical framework (the NSW Quality Teaching Framework) (NSW Department of Education and Training, n.d.-b) all of which were expected to be known and understood by all teachers, but to which not all beginning teachers had access. The extent of participation in professional development activities within and beyond the school provided therefore a practical measure of opportunity to participate in socialisation in the pursuit of skills and knowledge development required by all members of the profession.

Different employment contexts leading to different levels of cohesion in experience contributed to significantly different outcomes for teachers over the two years of initial experience. When situations of low or moderate cohesion were compounded by personal difficulties, teachers found their work both stressful and unsatisfying. Where cohesive contexts allowed for ongoing reflection and the perception of continuous progress, self-efficacy was built, and this sustained teachers through both personal and professional difficulties. Those who had experienced cohesive beginnings to their careers saw themselves and were seen by others to be competent teachers; those who had not were seen by themselves and by others as, at best, teachers-in-waiting.

*Employment context, cohesion and knowledge development*

Results suggested that the development of the knowledge base of teaching was a complex process which required far more than “practice” in a classroom. Teachers who were able to develop significant knowledge and skills were those who had access to a class of their own, a class whose development they were able to monitor over a continuing period of time in order to realistically reflect on and evaluate their own teaching. Having access to a school-based context enabled them to participate in teacher-talk with more experienced colleagues at point-of-need and their developing professional identity as teachers enabled them to increase their participation in school groups, and to interact with others in a climate of growing acceptance of them, and growing confidence in them.

Fewer than 30 per cent of all survey respondents began teaching with the stability of their own class in their own school. The opportunities for negotiating a strong professional identity based on self-perceptions of developing competence varied with the employment context in which these graduating teachers entered the profession and with opportunities presented within these contexts to develop as a teacher. Teachers who spent their first year in permanent or year-long temporary work on their own class were able to see themselves as accomplished teachers and were confident in reporting themselves to be such. Those who had spent their first year in casual work were far less inclined to have developed a strong self-image of

themselves as teachers and as such, were amongst those most likely to be considering leaving the profession.

Teachers whose initial employment situation locked them into constantly changing classroom and school situations, and who were unable to make progress in any one domain of professional knowledge, found that their capacity to learn in the remaining areas was similarly limited. They found themselves locked out of the experience which enabled the development of their own knowledge base, “stuck” in the novice stage of teaching, and losing the knowledge, skills, enthusiasm, and confidence with which they had first entered the profession.

### *Implications of the Findings*

The following section discusses the implications of the above findings for educational research, policy and practice.

#### *Implications of Findings for Educational Research*

The data obtained in this study challenged the orthodoxy of much of the literature on career entry, for example, Bullough (1989) and Huberman (1989), as well as assumptions concerning the early development of teachers’ professional identity (Coldron & Smith, 1999), the acquisition of practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1983; Grossman, 1990), and participation in professional socialisation (Helsby, 1995; Nias, 1986).

This research added a broader focus to existing studies of the work lives of beginning teaching by adding contextual detail from an Australian setting to the investigations of other researchers such as Smith (2007), Boreham (Boreham & Gray, 2005; 2006) Bullough (1992) and Huberman (1993). It suggested that British, U.S. and European models of “learning to teach” were not immediately transferable to the current NSW context where fragmented initial employment denied many beginning teachers a supported, structured and sequenced induction to the profession. Although writers outside Australia identified many of the issues faced by NSW beginning teachers (see Boreham et al., 2006), the additional complication in NSW of beginning

teachers without access to professional socialisation through schools is missing from the research either in Australia or overseas.

Much of the Australian literature related to beginning teaching focused not so much on teacher development but on the issues faced by beginning teachers (Booth & Runge, 2005; Dyson et al., 2007; Khamis, 2000; Kiggins, 2007; Kiggins & Gibson, 2001; Schuck, 2003; Somerville et al., 2010) and considered ways to ameliorate these by reference to processes such as induction. There was a focus on improving the systemic or structural supports; but in almost all cases the research was based on the experiences of beginning teachers who were newly appointed to permanent, continuing, class-based positions in schools.

The contemporary literature on beginning teachers, therefore, reflected very little of the data obtained in this study or the findings drawn from them. In most accounts, the experiences of beginning teachers have been identified in terms of classroom and personal difficulties. The data from this study, instead, focused on teacher knowledge and the process of knowledge development. This study drew together the prior perspectives on development of teaching skills in the literature on teacher expertise, and concepts of the knowledge base of teaching, and added to these a perspective on the role of varied employment contexts in the phased development of teacher knowledge in the initial years of teaching.

*(i) Extended knowledge of beginning teachers' work lives*

The data gathered through both qualitative and quantitative methods in this study combined to produce a record of the work lives of some beginning teachers in NSW. In this Australian state, the experience of a majority of graduating teachers was characterised by a so-called 'churning' of beginning teachers through a number of classes, a number of schools, and through periods of casual employment and unemployment (Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs, 2003). Induction and mentoring became problematic in these 'fractured' or 'dislocated' employment circumstances (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004); professional progress, teaching competence, professional socialisation and development of

professional identity in these increasingly uncertain contexts could no longer be assumed.

Despite some studies (e.g., McCormack & Thomas, 2002), and the NSW Department of Education and Training's website which suggested that casual teaching was a "lifestyle choice" the interview data from both casual and permanent teachers and data from both forced response and open items in the survey overwhelmingly indicated that casual teachers wanted permanent positions. For example, in the survey, 92 per cent of survey respondents and all participants in the case study clearly stated their first preference and priority for their second year of teaching was to be located in a secure and stable class-based position in one school.

This study suggested that the idea that early career teachers too often are unable to form a view of teaching as a career, rather than as short-term employment (Ewing & Manuel, 2005; Ewing & Smith, 2003; Manuel, 2003), was dependent more on the nature of initial employment experience than on any other issue. The majority of Australian teachers are within five to ten years of retiring and between 24 and 40 per cent in the western world of all newly-recruited teachers resign within five years (Ewing & Smith, 2003); teaching shortages loom. Urgent consideration is being given to the preparation and recruitment of teachers. Programs for attracting, recruiting and retaining beginning teachers must first provide some security of employment if the attrition of teaching graduates to other places and other employment is to be halted.

*(ii) Extended understanding of beginning teacher development*

This study indicated that teachers who worked in less than optimal school contexts, in insecure and fragmented positions without access to continuing responsibility for student learning or to collegial support, were beset by very similar problems to those of their permanent colleagues on an almost daily basis. However, they were unable to make significant progress in solving them, no matter the number of schools or classrooms in which they worked. In addition, casual teachers tended to focus on the "survival" rather than the "discovery" aspects of the initial "exploration" stage of

Huberman's work (1993) as student behaviour management dominated their thinking, planning and reflection.

This contrasted significantly with the experience of teachers in continuing positions. They experienced similar problems to those in fragmented teaching situations initially but, in addition, some teachers experienced additional problems as their permanent roles forced them into learning to program, to assess, to report and to relate to colleagues and parents. Their issues became the sites of considerable growth as teachers found the resources in the school and in themselves to obviate these problems and to move on to demonstrating increasing expertise relatively quickly.

Throughout this study, there emerged evident differences between the experiences of those in cohesive situations and those in fragmented situations who changed schools and classes to a greater or lesser extent during the first two years. In every aspect of development, there emerged a continuum of development which was unrelenting in its disadvantaging of those not in continuing positions. Differing levels of cohesion and certainty characterised teachers' employment contexts and significantly influenced their knowledge development, their participation in the teaching profession and their emerging professional identity.

*(iii) Extended knowledge of teacher career entry context*

On the one hand, the literature examined the development of teachers' professional knowledge typically in situations where teachers were located in secure and continuing positions. On the other hand, the reality of the situation for beginning primary teachers in New South Wales was that most were placed in positions where they had minimal responsibility for student learning, and limited opportunity for professional learning or for participation in the culture and community of a school. This research included as research participants the hitherto largely unacknowledged cohort (either in the Australian or international literature) of beginning teachers working in less than optimal, fragmented contexts and examined the implications for the profession of a large number of graduates who, in early career, have become deskilled and disillusioned by their early experience of learning to teach.

The present study provided evidence that the employment context itself, as the location of early teaching experience in both place and time, was the site wherein the processes of professional socialisation, professional identity negotiation and engagement in the practice of teaching occurred. As such, employment context was a critical factor in the development of knowledge and competence in early career, a factor that remained largely unacknowledged by employing authorities or researchers in Australia and elsewhere. Although ~~the~~ “power of context” (Berliner, 2001, p. 465) in teacher learning was frequently acknowledged in the literature, the definition of context was limited to that of particular schools in which teachers were employed and as such the literature failed to deal with the NSW situation where ~~e~~“context” was the employment context which offered varied security, continuity and professional recognition.

*(iv) Extended understanding of phases and stages of teaching*

The results of this study suggested that teachers in their first two years of teaching required substantial periods of time in secure and stable teaching environments (at minimum one year and more successfully, two years) to acquire knowledge of classroom practice, of school context and of self-as-teacher and to successfully integrate these domains into a personal professional knowledge base. The first two years appeared to comprise several defined phases which, with teachers in continuing positions, were also aligned to stages of increasing growth in knowledge, competence and confidence. It appeared that this period was not significantly shortened by favourable contextual factors. Even in ideal employment circumstances, there appeared to be a necessity to take time across one year of the school cycle to develop a basic level of competence. However, without contextual support, the expenditure of time past the first six months (that is, into Phase 2) did not appear to result in concomitant development of expertise. There appeared to be a direct link between increasing ~~e~~“experience” and ~~e~~“expertise” from Phase 1 to Phase 2 and from Novice to Advanced Beginner (Berliner, 1986, p. 9; 1995, p. 46) for those who had continuing teaching positions. Teachers in fragmented employment situations spent the same total time, but were unable to experience the iterations of knowledge acquisition and tended to become ~~s~~“stuck” at the Novice stage of development despite

the passage of time (see Figure 12). By the end of the first year (Phase 2) these teachers identified significant areas of loss in knowledge and teaching skills.

*(v) Contribution to methodological discussion*

The study privileged teacher voice through the use of teacher-constructed graphic organisers as reflective tools which served well the process of supporting beginning teachers in articulating reflection. This study acknowledged that beginning teachers were able to articulate their own experiences in the midst of the confusion and stress which many of them felt but were inhibited by their confusion in contributing effectively through response only to semi-structured interview questioning. Further reflective responses were provided when a set of structures was used which privileged the voices of these teachers with minimal researcher prompting. These structures included concept maps, PMI Charts (see Appendix D) and stimulated recall using digital photographs taken in the course of lesson observations. Each of these methods promoted teacher talk and teacher reflection and enabled teachers to discuss their decision-making and move to pedagogical explanation as an adjunct to the interview process which tended to produce recount. As beginning teachers, their conceptions of their role as they lived it over two years were caught in these methods and they facilitated the presentation and discussion of tangible representations of teacher thinking at specific points within the two year period. This set of structures suggested that finding a visual means of representing teacher experience in addition to the verbal means of the interview process was an effective way of capturing the experiences of inexperienced teachers whose verbal explication of their work lives was as yet relatively unformed.

*Implications of Findings for Educational Policy*

The lack of available permanent and continuing employment for many teachers added further stresses (not experienced by the majority of teachers with 20 or more years of experience) to those already recognised by researchers as belonging to the process of becoming a teacher. The data suggested that a redefinition of the common understanding of the problems faced by beginning teachers was required, one which included the prior issue of finding suitable employment as a teacher.



The data suggested firstly, that there was a need to recognise those beginning teachers who were *not* placed in cohesive teaching situations as “casual” beginning teachers, in need of and entitled to the same opportunities of induction, mentoring and professional development as those in more fortunate employment situations. Teachers in fragmented employment situations had inadequate opportunities to replicate activities or to engage in deliberate practice, and their knowledge, far from simply stagnating, in fact regressed. It is the regression and loss of knowledge and skills identified in this research study that requires redress in practice.

### *Workforce policy and planning*

The NSW Department of Education and Training recorded a total of 50,000 teachers in schools and 25,000 teachers registered for casual employment. While not all casual teachers were available for or wanting full-time or permanent work, the statistics for those who were “waiting” for such employment remain unavailable to those outside the DET. In the 2008/9 staffing operation, 114 of 1014 vacant positions were filled from the pool of new graduates. This represented a very small proportion of graduating teachers in NSW. The move to casualisation of the beginning teacher workforce has accelerated in the past five years and a new staffing system, introduced in 2008-9 appears to have restricted permanent employment for beginning teachers even further (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009).

In New South Wales, the present oversupply of primary teachers has led to an apparent acceptance by all stakeholders—schools, universities and at least one employing authority, the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET)—that beginning to teach as a “casual” teacher was an appropriate way to launch a teaching career. The DET, which coordinates public education for 730,000 students and 80,000 teachers across NSW and is responsible for employment of the majority of beginning teachers, describes casual teaching as:

A great way to gain an introduction to the NSW public education system...(NSW Department of Education and Training, n.d.-c).

Contrary to the findings of this study, the DET also promoted casual teaching as an opportunity for teacher learning:

For teachers awaiting permanent appointment, casual and temporary employment provides great opportunities to further develop professional skills (NSW Department of Education and Training, n.d.-a).

Despite the positive view of casual teaching propounded by the Department, the results of this research suggested strongly that casual teaching was an inappropriate way in which to launch a teaching career. The experiences of newly qualified teachers who participated in this study contradicted the DET's proposal that casual teaching "provides valuable experience for teachers just starting out as well as those seeking variety and new experiences in their careers" (NSW Department of Education and Training, n.d.-a). While casual teaching may, as the DET suggests, provide flexible career options for experienced teachers, it is nevertheless a less than optimal means by which newly qualified teachers could extend their knowledge base and transform the knowledge and skills attained in initial teacher education into professional competence in the practice of classroom teaching. The results of this study indicated that the process of learning to teach in contemporary contexts typified by multiple schools, multiple classrooms, multiple communities and with multiple students exacerbated the well-recognised problems (see Gardner & Williamson, 2007; Harrison et al., 2004; Kiggins, 2007; Veenman, 1984) encountered by all beginning teachers and provided few mechanisms by which casual teachers were able to resolve them to their own professional satisfaction.

The data suggested that unless beginning teachers can be employed in situations where they are able to develop knowledge of particular students over time, their capacity to develop effective reflective practice "on the job" is likely to diminish. In addition, particular skills with which teachers leave teacher education institutions atrophy from lack of use for those teachers who are locked into the status of casual teacher and locked out of real classroom practice.

The first year of teaching was for many teachers a time when the task of learning to teach appeared an overwhelming experience as they attempted to adjust to the practical requirements of induction into schools, systems and the profession. For those who were appointed to permanent positions within schools where support could be provided, the difficulties of developing their own practical knowledge of

teaching could be ameliorated through participation in a process of professional socialisation (Kardos & Johnson, 2007; Kardos et al., 2001; Olebe, 2005). For those excluded by virtue of their experience as casual teachers working in more than one school without the satisfaction of getting to know their ~~own~~ "class, and without opportunity for formal or informal learning from colleagues (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000), opportunity to develop as a teacher was significantly constrained.

### *Implications of Findings for Educational Practice*

This study provided findings about the role of schools in the work lives and development of beginning teachers. Firstly, there was at times a lack of recognition of those beginning teachers who were *not* placed in cohesive teaching situations as ~~real~~ "beginning teachers, and a failure to acknowledge that they were in need of and entitled to the same opportunities of induction, mentoring and professional development as those in more fortunate employment situations.

Secondly, the data revealed that beginning teachers in fragmented teaching situations had few opportunities for participation in induction, very limited access to formal professional learning, little access to formal mentoring and limited relationships with more experienced teachers. They therefore had few avenues to redress the regression in competence and loss of knowledge and skills that many experienced as a result of inadequate opportunities to replicate activities or to engage in ~~extensive~~ "deliberate practice" (Berliner, 2001, p. 465).

Thirdly, this study suggested that the employment context within which experience has been gained was a better predictor of levels and areas of competence than was length of experience alone. Exploring teachers' personal teaching histories, rather than assuming teacher competence based on previous models which linked teacher experience and teacher competence, foreshadowed a need for significant change in the process and content of induction and mentoring programs in schools.

Personnel in systems and in schools who are responsible for the induction, mentoring, preparation for accreditation (since October 2004), and development of the beginning teachers who will replace those now leaving will need to take account

not only of a teacher's initial teacher education, but of what they have learned or lost since leaving university. Beginning teachers' "skill sets" can no longer be assumed from knowledge of tertiary education courses or from a simple calculation of time between graduation and entry to the profession. Induction and mentoring of early career teachers will need to take into account teachers' previous employment experiences to adjust to and redress the loss of knowledge and skill which many report in their early years of fractured employment.

The findings suggested that those involved in schools, in teacher preparation programs and in the induction of beginning teachers into the profession need to strengthen the opportunity for each teacher to participate in professional socialisation in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998); to acquire case knowledge in personal practical knowledge of teaching; and to develop a view of self-as-teacher which will sustain commitment to the profession through the difficulties inherent in early experiences of learning to teach.

The data from this study revealed that current work on the efficacy of induction programs (see McCormack et al., 2006; McCormack & Thomas, 2003) has been limited by a failure to acknowledge shortcomings in the policy itself. The literature has taken little account of the longer-term effects of the current policy of restricting effective induction to those who were permanently employed (or even temporarily employed for a full year). This policy has left the majority of beginning teachers, who worked in several schools, outside the program and doubly disadvantaged. Not only did they not receive generalised induction about the process of becoming a teacher, but the lack of such induction meant that at a critical time in their careers, they remained unaware of the Departmental and school policies and practices which could assist in their ongoing success.

There was minimal literature available which considered the induction process for non-permanent teachers (McCormack & Thomas, 2002). Without induction, practice was less than satisfactory; as practice stultified or even declined, professional identity suffered. The question of the efficacy of induction programs in the development of beginning teacher knowledge has taxed researchers in Australia and overseas. There remain fruitful areas of discussion in relation to this topic in order to

enable schools to take a more nuanced and differentiated view of the knowledge, skills, background and experience of teachers appointed to them. Orientation and induction programs should move beyond the current assumptions of homogeneous experience and address the individuality of newly appointed teachers as teachers move into permanent positions, in order to continue to support and develop competent teachers for the future. The provision of concurrent class-free time for beginning teachers and their supervisors or mentors, despite the implications for school funding and staffing, would be a first step towards accomplishing greater understanding of the background and experience of new teachers.

### *Significance of the Findings*

The following section briefly summarises the significance of the above findings for educational research, policy and practice.

#### *Significance of the Findings for Educational Research*

This research added a variety of methodological innovations to the methods previously employed in educational research into the work lives of beginning teachers. It demonstrated through data gathering methods which are multi-site, multi-person and multi-method that complementary data could be profitably collected within the overarching methodology of case study. It demonstrated also the value of extending beyond the case study and its limitations of membership to include survey-questionnaire, which in essence remained a teacher self-reporting method, but gave access to a greater number of teachers more widely distributed. In an education system the size of NSW geographic distance was a limitation on a single-researcher study and the questionnaire served to ameliorate some of the effects of such a limitation. The use of so many data sources added to the validity and the reliability of the results and, hence, of the findings. Thus, from the findings and the conclusions, recommendations have been made which apply to contexts far larger than those represented by the initial focus of the case study.

The findings of this research study were significant for the educational research community in that they:

- i. extended the extant literature on the experiences of beginning teachers to include work on beginning teachers in Australia and in particular, to include those not located in a stable and cohesive school setting;
- ii. consolidated and extended models and theories on the composition of the professional knowledge base of teaching by incorporating previously discrete constructs about teacher knowledge into a composite model;
- iii. confirmed and extended models of stages of teacher development by including consideration of the process of movement from one stage to another; and
- iv. provided evidence of successful integration of a greater range of research methods which moved beyond the focus on semi-structured interview and /or survey-questionnaire to access the views of a particular cohort of beginning teachers.

#### *Recommendations for further research*

##### *(i) Extension of this research into international contexts*

This study has explored the experiences of beginning teachers in New South Wales, Australia, and drawn conclusions related to NSW teachers. It is appropriate that further research be carried out in Australian states other than NSW and in countries other than Australia where similar concerns of teacher recruitment, retention, attrition and teacher quality have arisen to ascertain whether the conditions underlying (and to some extent undermining) teacher development in Australia are also evident in other places.

##### *(ii) Further research into the factors contributing to differentiated experience*

This research study has considered a range of personal attributes and professional circumstances that have led to significant differences in teacher knowledge and teacher satisfaction. Further research into the contextual limitations on teacher learning where teachers' experiences are confined by the factors of status, number of schools and access to a class of their own would be of benefit in addressing the

emergent need for new structures and a new process of beginning teacher induction and development to include those who are currently outside systems and schools.

### *Significance of the Findings for Educational Policy*

The findings are significant for education policy-makers who are concerned about the quality of the teaching profession and particularly for those who control the entry of new teachers into the profession in that they:

- i. identify the personal and professional circumstances which differ for different groups of beginning teachers and in doing so, challenge the view that beginning teachers are a homogenous group in terms of experience, knowledge and background;
- ii. call for a redefinition of the understanding of the status and needs of teachers at early career entry; and
- iii. describe the effects on teacher knowledge of fragmented experience in the early years of teaching, and in particular present the finding that without appropriate cohesive experience in the first two years of teaching, the knowledge base of teachers is no longer at the same level as it was at graduation; for many teachers it is, in fact, reduced.

### *Recommendation for action*

The question of appropriate employment for beginning teachers is fundamental to the current research study and it would be profitable to engage in research into alternatives to current staffing systems in NSW in order to provide some security, continuity and class-based employment to these graduates for at least the first two years of their careers.

This study suggests that it is important to reconsider the duration of teacher preparation. There is a need to consider the initial two years of professional teaching as an integral part of the process of teacher preparation and this study suggests that this opportunity needs to be available to a far higher percentage of graduating teachers than is now the case. It is therefore recommended that further consideration be given to the Scottish system (despite its difference and size) in its assumption that

the first year after graduation constitutes an integral part of learning to teach. This policy has led to a situation where Scottish graduates are placed in schools for their induction year as a continuation of their fundamental academic education (see Boreham & Gray, 2005; Boreham et al., 2006). Although this system has its own difficulties in that the second year becomes one of uncertainty, its replication in NSW and its extension to a two year period would provide graduates with the opportunity to consolidate knowledge and skills in a cohesive initial teaching situation.

### *Significance of the Findings for Educational Practice*

The results of this study provided significant insights into the way in which policy and practice in relation to induction, mentoring and professional development require re-configuration. Beginning teachers who were appointed to short- or medium-term positions required practical support and opportunity to participate in a community of practice if they were to gain, rather than lose, skills in the first two years of teaching. Casual beginning teachers required ongoing support across schools with some consistency of experience in order to prepare for accreditation with the NSW Institute of Teachers (NSW Institute of Teachers, n.d.-a) as at present accreditation requirements for casual teachers are unworkable where the employment context is fragmented.

Induction and mentoring programs within schools and systems need to be more targeted and take into account the knowledge and skills which beginning teachers bring to their positions (whether long or short term). The “skill set” of beginning teachers needs to be assessed in terms of post-university experience as well as university education and to take account of the possibility that skills acquired at university but not put into practice will need to be revisited. The findings are significant for those in schools who are concerned with orientating, inducting, mentoring, accrediting and developing beginning teachers in that they:

- i. indicate the importance of the school context in the development of the teacher knowledge base;



- ii. indicate the need for the profession to take responsibility for developing a satisfactory way to take account of casual teachers' needs for induction, mentoring, professional development and preparation for accreditation; and
- iii. identify the need to revisit induction programs to take account of the possible loss of knowledge, despite gain in experience, likely to be experienced by casual teachers prior to appointment to a permanent position in a school.

### *Recommendations for action*

#### *(i) Induction and mentoring of casual teachers*

This study drew attention to the need for practitioners at school level to take account of the induction, mentoring, development and accreditation needs of those teachers who are currently frequently invisible to systems: the army of beginning casual teachers who are necessary to maintain the functioning of schools but whose development needs are rarely the subject of discussion or action. In order to achieve this, it is recommended that there be additional funding in place to provide opportunity for beginning teachers working in many schools to be assigned to a mentor in one school and to access the professional development available to those in permanent and continuing positions.

#### *(ii) Induction and mentoring of experienced, but not expert, teachers*

It is further recommended that local induction and mentoring processes take better account of individual teacher experience and to recognise that as teachers enter the system, the number of years since graduation may not equate to significant expertise.

### *Summary of Chapter 7*

This concluding chapter has presented the findings of the study in relation to the overarching research aim. It has considered also the way in which the data obtained from this study have led to a redefinition of a number of theoretical constructs and models in relation to teacher development and in the light of these redefinitions, addressed the contributing Research Questions. The chapter outlined significant findings in three areas – educational research, educational policy and educational

practice – and in outlining the significance of each has made recommendations for further research and action.

This chapter concludes the thesis. In doing so, it establishes that the effect of differentiated employment experience on the knowledge base and teaching competence of beginning teachers in Australia is far reaching. Teachers who began their careers in continuing, secure, cohesive, class-based positions in one school and who remained at this school for two years showed substantial growth in their knowledge of teaching practice, in their capacity to know and work within the context of schools, and in their identity as teachers. Teachers who experienced uncertain and fragmented beginnings without a class of their own and outside a single school made few gains and by the end of their first year reported significant loss of knowledge, skills, confidence and commitment.

## REFERENCES

- Abbott-Chapman, J. (2005). Let's keep our beginning teachers! *Principal Matters, Summer 2005*, 2-4.
- Abbott-Chapman, J., Hughes, P., & Williamson, J. (2001). Teachers' perceptions of classroom competencies over a decade of change. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(2), 171-185.
- Anderson, L. (1989). Learners and learning. In M. C. Reynolds (Ed.), *Knowledge base for the beginning teacher* (pp. 85-98). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Angelle, P. (2006). Instructional leadership and monitoring: Increasing teacher intent to stay through socialisation. *NAASP Bulletin*, 90(4), 318-334.
- Anthony, G., & Ord, K. (2007). *I was a merchant banker and now I am a secondary teacher*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Wollongong, Australia.
- Ball, D., Thames, M., & Phelps, G. (2008). Content knowledge for teaching: What makes it special? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 59(5), 389-407.
- Ball, S. J., & Goodson, I. (1985). *Teachers' lives and careers*. London: Falmer Press.
- Baynes, H., Abbott-Chapman, J., Hughes, P., & Williamson, J. (2000). *Teaching competencies in the classroom - the role of the professional learning community*. Hobart, Australia: Youth Education Studies Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.
- Beattie, M. (2000). Narratives of professional learning: Becoming a teacher and learning to teach. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 1(2), 1-23.
- Beijaard, D., Verloop, N., & Vermunt, J. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(7), 749-764.
- Bennett, N., & Carré, C. (1993). *Learning to teach*. London: Routledge.
- Berliner, D. C. (1986). In pursuit of the expert pedagogue. *Educational Researcher*, 15(7), 5-13.
- Berliner, D. C. (1991). Educational psychology and pedagogical expertise: New findings and new opportunities for thinking about training. *Educational Psychologist*, 26(2), 145-155.
- Berliner, D. C. (1994). Expertise: The wonder of exemplary performances. In J. N. Mangieri & C. C. Block (Eds.), *Creating powerful thinking in teachers and students* (pp. 161-186). Fort Worth, TX: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

- Berliner, D. C. (1995). Teacher expertise. In L. W. Anderson (Ed.), *International encyclopaedia of teaching and teacher education* (pp. 46-52). Oxford: Pergamon.
- Berliner, D. C. (1998). Relations between teachers' subject matter knowledge, teaching experience and their mental models of children's minds and learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 14(6), 579-595.
- Berliner, D. C. (2001). Learning about and learning from expert teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 35(5), 463-482.
- Blase, J. (1997). The micropolitics of teaching. In B. J. Biddle, T. L. Good & I. F. Goodson (Eds.), *International handbook of teachers and teaching* (Vol. 2, pp. 939-970). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.
- Block, J. H., & Hazelip, K. (1995). Teachers' beliefs and belief systems. In L. W. Anderson (Ed.), *International encyclopaedia of teaching and teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 25-28). Oxford: Pergamon.
- Board of Studies NSW. (n.d.). NSW primary curriculum: Foundation statements. Retrieved 21 May 2010, from [http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/foundation-statements/foundation\\_statements.pdf](http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/files/foundation-statements/foundation_statements.pdf)
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Booth, T., & Runge, J. (2005). *Factors influencing the employment experience and aspirations of a cohort of beginning teachers: Two years on*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Surfers Paradise, Australia.
- Boreham, N. (2005). An instrument for measuring the job satisfaction of newly qualified teachers. Paper presented at the Annual Teaching and Learning Research Programme Conference, Cardiff, UK. Retrieved 11 January, 2009 from <http://www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/epl/docs/JobsatNB.pdf>.
- Boreham, N., & Gray, P. (2005). Professional identity of teachers in their early development. Retrieved 11 January 2009, from <http://www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/epl/docs/ProfidentityNB.pdf>
- Boreham, N., Gray, P., & Blake, A. (2006). Job satisfaction among newly qualified teachers in Scotland. Retrieved 11 January 2009, from <http://www.ioe.stir.ac.uk/research/projects/epl/documents/NBBERA06.pdf>
- Borko, H., & Putnam, R. (1995). Expanding a teacher's knowledge base: A cognitive psychological perspective on professional development. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: New paradigms and practices* (pp. 35-65). New York: Teachers College Press.

- Borko, H., & Putnam, R. (1996). Learning to teach. In D. C. Berliner & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 673-708). New York: Macmillan.
- Brown, J., Doecke, B., & Loughran, J. (1997). *Understanding beginning to teach: Learning about the transition from tertiary education to a professional career*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, Australia.
- Bullough, R. V. (1989). *First-year teacher: A case study*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Bullough, R. V. (1994). Analyzing personal teaching metaphors in preservice teacher education as a means for encouraging professional development. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(1), 197-224.
- Bullough, R. V. (1997). Becoming a teacher: Self and the social location of teacher education. In B. J. Biddle, T. L. Good & I. F. Goodson (Eds.), *International handbook of teachers and teaching* (Vol. 1, pp. 79-134). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Bullough, R. V. (2001). Pedagogical content knowledge circa 1907 and 1987: A study in the history of an idea. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(6), 655-666.
- Bullough, R. V., & Baughman, K. (1995). Changing contexts and expertise in teaching: First-year teacher after seven years. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11(5), 461-477.
- Bullough, R. V., Knowles, J. G., & Crow, N. A. (1992). *Emerging as a teacher*. London: Routledge.
- Burns, R. (2000). *Introduction to research methods* (4th ed.). Frenchs Forest, Australia: Pearson Education.
- Calderhead, J. (1981). Stimulated recall: A method for research on teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 51(2), 211-217.
- Calderhead, J. (1987). *Exploring teachers' thinking*. London: Cassell.
- Calderhead, J. (1988). *Teachers' professional learning*. London: Falmer Press.
- Calderhead, J. (1996). Teachers: Beliefs and knowledge. In D. C. Berliner & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 709-725). New York: Macmillan.
- Calderhead, J., & Gates, P. (1993). *Conceptualizing reflection in teacher development*. London: Falmer Press.

- Carter, K. (1987). Meaning and metaphor: Case knowledge in teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 29(2), 109-115.
- Cheng, M. H., & Pang, K. C. (1997). Teacher socialization: Implications for the design and management of initial teacher education programmes. *Education & Training*, 39(4/5), 195-204.
- Churchill, R., & Walkington, J. (2002). *Preparation, transition and induction: A longitudinal study of learning to teach*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Brisbane, Australia.
- Clandinin, D. J. (1986). *Classroom practice: Teacher images in action*. London: Falmer Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1995). *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clark, R., & Antonelli, F. (2009). *Why teachers leave: Results of an Ontario survey 2006-08*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Clarke, D., & Hollingsworth, H. (2002). Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18(8), 947-967.
- Cockburn, A. (2000). Elementary teachers' needs: Issues of retention and recruitment. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(2), 223-238.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Coldron, J., & Smith, R. (1999). Active location in teachers' construction of their professional identities. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 31(6), 711-726.
- Commonwealth Department of Education Science and Training. (2002). *An ethic of care: Effective programmes for beginning teachers*. Canberra, Australia: Author.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (Eds.). (1999). *Shaping a professional identity: Stories of educational practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Corbell, K. A., Reiman, A. J., & Nietfield, J. L. (2008). The Perceptions of Success Inventory for Beginning Teachers: Measuring its psychometric properties. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(6), 1551-1563.
- Cotterill, P., & Letherby, G. (1994). The "person" in the researcher. In R. G. Burgess (Ed.), *Studies in Qualitative Methodology* (Vol. 4, pp. 107-136). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

- Cowley, T. M. (1999). *Teacher relocation and teaching quality: An examination of the impact of teacher relocation on teachers, their work and their quality of teaching*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia.
- Craig, C. (1995). Knowledge communities: a way of making sense of how beginning teachers come to know in their professional knowledge contexts. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 25, 151-175.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Crittenden, A. (1994). Evaluation of the relief teaching programme in government primary schools in Western Australia. *Issues in Educational Research*, 4(2), 81-93.
- Cropley, A. (2002). *Qualitative research methods. An introduction for students of psychology and education*. Riga, Latvia: Zinatne.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57, 300-314.
- Day, C., Kington, A., Stobart, G., & Sammons, P. (2006). The personal and professional selves of teachers: Stable and unstable identities. *British Educational Research Journal*, 32(4), 601-616.
- de Negri, B., & Thomas, E. (2003). *Making sense of focus group findings: A systematic participatory analysis approach*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development.
- De Ruyter, D., & Conroy, J. (2002). The formation of identity: The importance of ideals. *Oxford Review of Education*, 28(4), 509-522.
- de Vaus, D. A. (2002). *Surveys in social research* (5th ed.). Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Deal, D., White, S., & Reilly, N. (2009). *Teacher career path decisions: Why do teachers choose to leave the public schools?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Desforges, C. (1995). How does experience affect theoretical knowledge for teaching? *Learning and Instruction*, 5, 385-400.
- Dunkin, M. J., & Biddle, B. J. (1974). *The study of teaching*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Dyson, M., Albon, N., & Hutchinson, S. (2007). *Can we improve it? Pre-service education, minimising the negative issues of beginning teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Wollongong, Australia.
- Edwards, A. (2005). Let's get beyond community and practice: The many meanings of learning by participating. *Curriculum Journal*, 16(1), 49-65.
- Eisner, E. W., & Peshkin, A. (1990). Part 1: Subjectivity and Objectivity. In E.W.Eisner & A.Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education* (pp. 15-17). London: Croom Helm.
- Elbaz, F. (1983). *Teacher thinking: A study of practical knowledge*. London: Croom Helm.
- Ellis, V. (2007). Taking subject knowledge seriously: From professional knowledge recipes to complex conceptualizations of teacher development. *Curriculum Journal*, 18(4), 447-462.
- Eraut, M. (1994). *Developing professional knowledge and competence*. London: Falmer Press.
- Ewing, R., & Manuel, J. (2005). Retaining quality early career teachers in the profession. *Change: Transformations in Education*, 8(1), 1-16.
- Ewing, R., & Smith, D. (2003). Retaining quality teachers in the profession. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 2(1), 15-32.
- Featherstone, H. (1993). Learning from the first years of classroom teaching: The journey in, the journey out. *Teachers College Record*, 95(1), 93-113.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Norman, P. J. (2000). Teacher education: From initial preparation to continuing professional development. In B. Moon, M. Ben-Peretz & S. Brown (Eds.), *Routledge international companion to education* (pp. 732-755). London: Routledge.
- Fessler, R. (1995). Dynamics of teacher career stages. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education: New paradigms and practices* (pp. 171-192). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Filstad, C. (2004). How newcomers use role models in organizational socialization. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 16(7), 396-409.



- Flores, M. A. (2006). Being a novice teacher in two different settings: Struggles, continuities and discontinuities. Retrieved 1 October 2008, from <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=12721>
- Fuller, A., Unwin, L., Felstead, A., Jewson, N., & Kakavelakis, K. (2007). Creating and using knowledge: An analysis of the differentiated nature of workplace learning environments. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(5), 743-759.
- Galloway, S., & Morrison, M. (Eds.). (1994). *The supply story: Professional substitutes in education*. London: Falmer Press.
- Gardner, C., & Williamson, J. (2007). The complexities of learning to teach: "Just what is it that I am doing?" In T. Townsend & R. Bates (Eds.), *Handbook of Teacher Education* (pp. 691-710). The Netherlands: Springer.
- Gibbs, G. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London: Sage.
- Goodson, I. F. (1997). The life and work of teachers. In B. J. Biddle, T. L. Good & I. F. Goodson (Eds.), *International Handbook of Teachers and Teaching* (Vol. 1, pp. 135-152). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.
- Grossman, P. (1990). *The making of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Grossman, P. (1995). Teachers' knowledge. In L. W. Anderson (Ed.), *International encyclopaedia of teaching and teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 20-24). Oxford: Pergamon.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (1992). *Understanding teacher development*. London: Cassell.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2000). Mentoring in the new millennium. *Theory into Practice*, 39(1), 50-56.
- Harrison, L., Allan, R., Phillip, J., & Reid, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Into the whirly wind: Stories of 'first year out' teaching*. Bathurst, Australia: Charles Sturt University - School of Teacher Education.
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Helsby, G. (1995). Teachers' construction of professionalism in England in the 1990s. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 21(3), 317-332.
- Herrington, A., Herrington, J., Kervin, L., & Ferry, B. (2006). The design of an online community of practice for beginning teachers. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, 6(1), 120-132.

- Hiebert, J., Gallimore, R., & Stigler, J. (2002). A knowledge base for the teaching profession: What would it look like and how can we get one? *Educational Researcher*, 31(2), 3-15.
- Hinde Mcleod, J. (2000). *Teachers' working knowledge: The value of lived experience*. Paper presented at the Seventh International Literacy and Education Research Network (LERN) Conference on Learning, RMIT, Melbourne, Australia.
- House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training. (2007). *Top of the class: Report on the inquiry into teacher education*. Canberra, Australia: The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.
- Huberman, M. (1989). The professional life cycle of teachers. *Teachers College Record*, 91(1), 31-57.
- Huberman, M. (1993). The model of the independent artisan in teachers' professional relations. In J. W. Little & M. W. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Teachers' work: Individuals, colleagues, and contexts* (pp. 11-50). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Huberman, M. (1995). Professional careers and professional development. In T. R. Guskey & M. Huberman (Eds.), *Professional development in education. New paradigms and practices* (pp. 193-224). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Huberman, M., Gronauer, M. M., & Marti, J. (1993). *The lives of teachers*. London: Cassell.
- Huberman, M., Thompson, C., & Weiland, S. (1997). Perspectives on the teaching career. In B. J. Biddle, T. L. Good & I. F. Goodson (Eds.), *International Handbook of Teachers and Teaching* (Vol. 1, pp. 11-78). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.
- Huntly, H. (2008). Teachers' work: Beginning teachers' conceptions of competence. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 35(1), 125-145.
- Inman, D., & Marlow, L. (2004). Teacher retention: Why do beginning teachers remain in the profession? *Education*, 124(4), 605-614.
- Junor, A., O'Brien, J., & O'Brien, S. (2004). Casual teachers: Will emerging staff shortages remove their employment disadvantage? Retrieved 17 January 2006, from <http://www.griffith.edu.au/search/search.cgi?query=airaanz2004&collection=griffith>
- Kardos, S., & Johnson, S. (2007). On their own and presumed expert: New teachers' experiences with their colleagues. *Teachers College Record*, 109(9), 2083-2106.

- Kardos, S., Johnson, S. M., Peske, H. G., Kauffman, D., & Liu, E. (2001). Counting on colleagues: New teachers encounter the professional cultures of their schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 37(2), 250-290.
- Kersaint, G., Lewis, J., Potter, R., & Meisels, G. (2007). Why teachers leave: Factors that influence retention and resignation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 775-794.
- Kervin, L., & Turbill, J. (2003). Teaching as a craft: Making links between pre-service training and professional practice. Retrieved 17 June 2009, from [http://education.waikato.ac.nz/journal/english\\_journal/uploads/files/2003v2n3art2.pdf](http://education.waikato.ac.nz/journal/english_journal/uploads/files/2003v2n3art2.pdf)
- Khamis, M. (2000). The beginning teacher. In S. Dinham & C. Scott (Eds.), *Teaching in context* (pp. 1-17). Camberwell, Australia: ACER.
- Kiggins, J. (2007). *Lessons from the classroom: First year teachers report about their perceptions of life as a beginning teacher*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Wollongong, Australia.
- Kiggins, J., & Gibson, S. (2001). Planning since Boxing Day: Addressing some of the perceived problems of beginning teachers. Retrieved 16 June 2009, from <https://www.aare.edu.au/02pap/kig02379.htm>
- Krieg, S. (2010). Novice teachers' work: Constructing 'different' children? *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(1), 57-68.
- Kyriacou, C., & Kunc, R. (2007). Beginning teachers' expectations of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(8), 1246-1257.
- Lang, C. (1999). *When does it get any easier? Beginning teachers' experiences during their first year of teaching*. Paper presented at the AARE-NZARE Conference, Melbourne, Australia.
- Lawn, M., & Grace, G. (Eds.). (1987). *Teachers: The culture and politics of work*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.
- Leinhardt, G. (1990). Capturing craft knowledge in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 19(2), 18-25.
- Leinhardt, G., & Greeno, J. G. (1986). The cognitive skill of teaching. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78(2), 75-95.
- Little, J. W. (2002). Locating learning in teachers' communities of practice: Opening up problems of analysis in records of everyday work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18(8), 917-946.

- Little, J. W., & McLaughlin, M. W. (Eds.). (1993). *Teachers' work: Individuals, colleagues and contexts*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Livingston, C., & Borko, H. (1989). Expert-novice differences in teaching: A cognitive analysis and implications for teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(4), 36-42.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Loughran, J. (2003). Attempting to document teachers' professional knowledge. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(6), 853-873.
- Manuel, J. (2003). 'Such are the ambitions of youth': Exploring issues of retention and attrition of early career teachers in New South Wales. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 31(2), 139-151.
- Marlow, L., & Inman, D. (1997). Beginning teachers: Are they still leaving the profession? *The Clearing House*, 70(4), 211-214.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Maykut, P. S., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: Falmer Press.
- McCormack, A., Gore, J., & Thomas, K. (2006). Early career teacher professional learning. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(1), 95-113.
- McCormack, A., & Thomas, K. (2002). *The reality of uncertainty: The plight of casual beginning teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.
- McCormack, A., & Thomas, K. (2003). Is survival enough? Induction experiences of beginning teachers within a New South Wales context. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 31(2), 125-138.
- Microsoft Office. (2007). Microsoft Office Excel (Version 2007).
- Ministerial Council on Education Employment and Youth Affairs. (2003). *National report on schooling in Australia, 2003*. Canberra, Australia: Department of Education, Science and Training.
- Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs. (2004). *Demand and supply of primary and secondary school teachers in Australia*. Canberra, Australia: Department of Education, Science and Training.
- Morgan, D. L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Morine-Dersheimer, G. (1989). Preservice teachers' conceptions of content and pedagogy: Measuring growth in reflective, pedagogical decision-making. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(5), 46-52.
- Nettle, E. B. (1998). Stability and change in the beliefs of student teachers during practice teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 14(2), 193-204.
- Nias, J. (1981). Teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction: Herzberg's 'two-factor' hypothesis revisited. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 2(3), 235-246.
- Nias, J. (1986). *Teacher socialisation: The individual in the system*. Warrn Ponds, Australia: Deakin University.
- Nidds, J., & McGerald, J. (1994). Substitute teachers: Seeking meaningful instruction in the teacher's absence. *The Clearing House*, 68(1), 25-26.
- Nilsson, P. (2008). Teaching for understanding: The complex nature of pedagogical content knowledge in pre-service education. *International Journal of Science Education*, 30(10), 1281-1299.
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (2002a). *2002 Directory New South Wales Department of Education and Training*. Sydney, Australia: Author.
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (2002b). *Annual Report 2002*. Sydney, Australia: Author.
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (2003). *Annual Report 2003*. Sydney, Australia: Author.
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (2009). *Staffing of schools: 2008-2009 staffing operation*. Retrieved 3 August 2009, from <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/employment/recruit/staffingschools/staffoperation.pdf>
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (n.d.-a). Casual and temporary employment. Retrieved 23 August 2009, from [http://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/grp/downloads/GradGuide\\_working.pdf](http://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/grp/downloads/GradGuide_working.pdf)
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (n.d.-b). Quality Teaching resources. Retrieved 12 June 2010, from <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/proflearn/areas/qt/resources.htm>
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (n.d.-c). Recruitment and employment: About casual teaching. Retrieved 23 August 2009, from <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/employment/recruit/casualteachers/about.htm>

- NSW Institute of Teachers. (n.d.-a). Accreditation - Policies and Manual. Retrieved 20 May 2010, from <http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Accreditation---Policies---Manual.html>
- NSW Institute of Teachers. (n.d.-b). Professional Teaching Standards. Retrieved 31 August, 2009, from <http://www.nswteachers.nsw.edu.au/Main-Professional-Teaching-standards.html>
- Olebe, M. (2005). Helping new teachers stay in the profession. *The Clearing House*, 78(4), 158-163.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2004). The Quality of the Teaching Workforce: Policy Brief. Retrieved October 7, 2007, from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/9/29478720.pdf>
- Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, 62(3), 307-332.
- Pallant, J. F. (2005). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (Version 12-14)* (2nd ed.). Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Pearson, C. A. (2002). Am I doing what I am supposed to be doing? Mentoring novice teachers through the uncertainties and challenges of their first year of teaching. *Mentoring and tutoring: Partnership in learning*, 10(1), 71-82.
- Pietsch, M., Gardner, C., Myhill, M., Pietsch, B., & Williamson, J. (2009). *Changes, Changes! Challenges perceived by early career and later career teachers and administrators*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Pietsch, M., & Williamson, J. (2005). *"I felt like a teacher today."* *Beginning teachers and professional identity*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Surfers Paradise, Australia.
- Pillow, W. S. (2003). Confession, catharsis or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *Qualitative studies in education*, 16(2), 175-196.
- Preston, B. (2000). *Teacher supply and demand to 2005: Projections and context*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Council of Deans of Education.
- Provenso, E. F., McCloskey, G. N., Kottkamp, R. B., & Cohn, M. M. (1989). Metaphor and meaning in the language of teachers. *Teachers College Record*, 90(4), 551-573.
- QSR International. (2000). NVivo qualitative data analysis software (Version 1.3): QSR International.

- Quintrell, M., & Maguire, M. (1998). *Older and wiser, or just at the end of the line? The experiences of mature trainee teachers*. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Belfast, Northern Ireland.
- Reitano, P. (2005). *Using video stimulated recall and concept mapping in reflective teaching practices: Strengths, limitations and potential threats*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Surfers Paradise, Australia.
- Reynolds, A. (1992). What is competent beginning teaching? A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 62(1), 1-35.
- Reynolds, A. (1995). The knowledge base for beginning teachers: Education professionals' expectations versus research findings on learning to teach. *The Elementary School Journal*, 95(3), 199-221.
- Reynolds, M. C. (Ed.). (1989). *Knowledge base for the beginning teacher* (1st ed.). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Robertson, M., Hancock, D., & Allen, L. (2006). Why novice teachers leave. *Principal Leadership*, 6(8), 33-36.
- Sachs, J. (2001). Teacher professional identity: Competing discourses, competing outcomes. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(2), 149-161.
- Salant, P., & Dillman, D. A. (1994). *How to conduct your own survey*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Schuck, S. (2003). Getting help from the outside: Developing a support network for beginning teachers. *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 4(1), 49-67.
- Scott, D., & Usher, R. (1999). *Researching education*. London: Cassell.
- Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22.

- Shulman, L. S., & Shulman, J. H. (2004). How and what teachers learn: A shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(2), 257-271.
- Skilbeck, M., & Connell, H. (2003). *Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Australian country background report*. Canberra, Australia: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Skilbeck, M., & Connell, H. (2004). *Teachers for the future: The changing nature of society and related issues for the teaching workforce*. Canberra, Australia: Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.
- Smith, R. (2007). Developing professional identities and knowledge: Becoming primary teachers. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 13(4), 377-397.
- Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(3), 681-714.
- Somerville, M., Plunkett, M., & Dyson, M. (2010). New teachers learning in rural and regional Australia. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(1), 39-55.
- SPSS Inc. (2007). *SPSS for Windows (Version 16.0)*. Chicago: SPSS.
- SPSS Inc. (n.d.). Missing data: The hidden problem. Retrieved February 23, 2006, from [http://www.spss.com/regitation/premium/consol056.cfm?WP\\_ID=12](http://www.spss.com/regitation/premium/consol056.cfm?WP_ID=12)
- Squires, G. (1999). *Teaching as a professional discipline*. London: Falmer Press.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (2000). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 435-454). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sternberg, R. J., & Horvath, J. A. (1995). A prototype view of expert teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 24(6), 9-17.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research: techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Street, C. (2004). Examining learning to teach through a social lens: How mentors guide newcomers into a professional community of learners. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 31(2), 7-24.
- Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



- Tedlock, B. (2000). Ethnography and ethnographic representation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 455-484). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tickle, L. (2000). *Teacher induction: The way ahead*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Tilley, A. J. (1996). *An introduction to psychological research and statistics* (3rd ed.). Brisbane, Australia: Pineapple Press.
- Trent, J., & Gao, X. (2009). "At least I'm the type of teacher I want to be": Second-career English language teachers' identity formation in Hong Kong secondary schools. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(3), 253-270.
- Tromans, C. (2002). *Temporary employment and the beginning teacher*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Brisbane, Australia.
- Turner-Bisset, R. (1999). The knowledge bases of the expert teacher. *British Educational Research Journal*, 25(1), 39-55.
- Turner, M. (1994). The management of induction of newly qualified teachers in primary schools. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 20(3), 325-341.
- Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54(2), 143-178.
- Waldsorf, K., & Lynn, S. K. (2002). The early years: Mediating the organizational environment. *The Clearing House*, 75(4), 190-194.
- Walkington, J. (2005). Becoming a teacher: Encouraging development of teacher identity through reflective practice. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 33(1), 53-64.
- Watlington, E. J., Shockley, R., Earley, D. L., Huie, K. K., Morris, J. D., & Lieberman, M. (2004). Variables associated with teacher retention: A multi-year study. *The Teacher Educator*, 40(1), 56-66.
- Watson, C. (2006). Narratives of practice and the construction of identity in teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 12(5), 509-526.
- Watzke, J. L. (2007). Longitudinal research on beginning teacher development: Complexity as a challenge to concerns-based stage theory. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(1), 106-122.
- Webb, P. (1992). *Relief teaching for Tasmanian education: Perspectives, policies and practices*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia.

- Weiss, M. (1999). Perceived workplace conditions and first-year teachers' morale, career choice commitment and planned retention: A secondary analysis. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15(8), 861-879.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilhelm, K., Dewhurst-Savellis, J., & Parker, G. (2000). Teacher stress? An analysis of why teachers leave and why they stay. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 6(3), 291-304.
- Williams, C. (2002). *Telling tales: Stories from new teachers in NSW country schools*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, Australia.
- Williamson, J., Webb, P., Cowley, T., & Churchill, R. (1995). *Teachers' work lives: The view from relief teachers, transferred teachers and teachers implementing educational change*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Hobart, Australia.
- Wilson, S., & Berne, J. (1999). Teacher learning and the acquisition of professional knowledge. *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 173-209.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zeichner, K. M., & Gore, J. M. (1990). Teacher socialization. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 329-348). New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning  
teachers: The influence of differentiated employment  
experience on the development of competency in teaching

by

Marilyn Pietsch

B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed., M.Ed. Admin., A. Mus. A., ATCL, LTCL

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Volume 2 (Appendices)

University of Tasmania

January, 2011

## APPENDICES

Appendix A      Application to Approach Teacher Education Students

Appendix A1      Letter of Application to Charles Sturt University

Appendix A2      Presentation to Final Year Teacher Education Students

*Appendix A1 Letter of Application to University*

67 Park Street  
WEST WYALONG NSW 2671

Professor Mike King  
Head of School  
School of Education  
Charles Sturt University-Riverina  
Locked Bag 588  
WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2678

19 February 2001

Dear Professor King

I am a student of the University of Tasmania, studying for a PhD in education under the supervision of Professor John Williamson. As well, I am principal of West Wyalong Public School. I am writing to request your assistance as I would like to commence research into the early development of beginning teachers.

I have been involved in the internship program of CSU for some years now and would like to track the careers of some of the interns of 2002 as they enter a teaching career. I am interested in researching the effect of the initial context of casual teaching on the initial and subsequent development of teacher knowledge and would like to engage in case study research into the work lives of students before they enter their internship, post-internship, pre-service and during their initial two years of teaching.

At this stage, I would appreciate it greatly if I were able to make an appointment to talk with you by phone or in person in order to discuss the feasibility of such a study from the point of view of CSU and, in particular, the possibility of approaching students from CSU who may be prepared to be involved in such a study.

My contact details are as follows:

Telephone 02 6972 2810 (home)  
02 6972 2157 (work)  
04 2872 2810 (mobile)

e-mail [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au)

My home address is as above and my workplace is West Wyalong Public School, Park Street, West Wyalong, NSW, 2671.

My thanks in anticipation,

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Pietsch

*Appendix A2      Presentation to Final Year Teacher Education Students*



## **Talk to CSU students 1.11.02**

### **Who am I?**

1, Name, position, student status

### **What am I doing?**

2, I am researching the experiences of beginning teachers – using case study methodology to look at what it is like to be a beginning teacher in the current employment context i.e., as a casual teacher

### **Why am I doing it?**

I think it is important - young people in your position are the foundation of the profession and many of you will be also the foundation of the system I have chosen to serve in because of my own beliefs in the value of education, and especially public education as a social good in the creation of a just and equitable society.

I am concerned at the way in which beginning teachers who have highly developed knowledge and well developed skills both in teaching and learning are relegated by the current system (social and economic) to casual teaching for considerable periods of their early experience. This is different – but policy and induction practice lags behind reality.

### **What will this lead to?**

We can only change it if we can do several things: produce research with credible data that tells policy makers and practitioners what it is really like out there to go from the high powered thinking required by university courses, with the most up to date educational knowledge of anyone in the system and to be presented with employment which pays you, but does not allow for consistent development through supported reflection on practice,

AND produce recommendations that are practicable, research-based and reflect what will help to establish a foundation for teacher learning which does not see us lose up to half of teaching graduates in the first five years.

**How can you help?**

I need your help to provide me with data and to work with me to develop new findings and thence new recommendations that can be taken into practice.

**My belief in the value of this comes from my current experience**

Jane, Liz, Amy, Simone, Tanya – still awaiting permanent positions – or in Tanya's case, permanent placement. All with high-level skills, all with the capacity for immediate development – all having had to begin with day-by-day relief in different places and with different classes and children.

**My own experiment – with Jane – mentoring a student teacher**

I am asking that you will allow me to share your journey – ups and downs (my own ups and downs in changing pedagogy) – for me, the joy is now in seeing and supporting change and development in both children and teachers – and help from the beginning to make the profession a strong one.

I would like to share a journey where you make the links between your last four years and the next two and we can learn from each other

**What can I do for you?**

I can help you – as a sounding board, a critical friend, a shoulder to lean on, another opinion as you make the journey, a structured opportunity to reflect on your practice with someone outside your immediate workplace

**Where to from here?**

Try to negotiate a time – 4.00 pm at CSU – one day next week – a classroom to be negotiated with Tom. I will email confirmation if you will leave me your details

today or email/phone/mail them to me. Please complete the details – if you have friends who would like to join with us but are not here today, please invite them. Hand out research plan.

Thank you for your time.

Beginning teaching: Marilyn Pietsch

Please write your name and contact details (phone, mobile, address, email) and circle the one/s you would prefer me to use to contact you in the near future.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home

address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone numbers:

Home \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix B      Information Sheet and Statement of Informed Consent

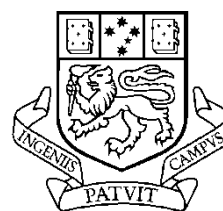
Appendix B1      Focus Group Interview Participants: Information Sheet  
and Statement of Informed Consent

Appendix B2      Individual Interview Participants: Information Sheet  
and Statement of Informed Consent

*Appendix B1      Focus Group Interview Participants*

Information Sheet and Statement of Informed Consent:

Focus Group Participants



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Information Sheet  
Focus Group Members  
Participation in Ethical Research

Title of Project

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching.

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in this project. The following points are intended to provide you with information to assist you in deciding whether or not to continue with your participation and attend the proposed focus group meeting.

*Background*

At present, I am employed by the NSW Department of Education and Training as principal at West Wyalong Public School and as such, I have been involved over several years with the internship program of CSU and with supporting beginning teachers. I am completing this project as part of my studies towards the award of a doctor in philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in education at the University of Tasmania and as a way of assisting me to better support beginning teachers in my own school. I believe that in participating in such a study together we would be able to contribute to current understanding of the ways in which beginning teachers in New South Wales acquire knowledge of teaching, and thus also to identifying better ways in which other teachers in schools may best assist beginning teachers to move from novice to competent teacher during the early years of their careers. I believe it may also benefit participants to be involved in a project which assists them to reflect on their own experiences and perspectives as beginning teachers.

Marilyn Pietsch

*Name of chief investigator*

Professor John Williamson, as my supervisor, is the designated chief investigator while I will be the investigator to have direct involvement with research subjects

*Purpose of the study*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which a small group of beginning teachers in New South Wales primary schools acquires practical knowledge of teaching and thus develops competency in the classroom in their initial

years of teaching in different teaching contexts as casual, temporary and permanent teachers.

The study will be based on the experience of beginning teachers in their initial years of primary teaching following the four-year Bachelor of Education (teacher training) course at Charles Sturt University-Riverina (Wagga Wagga) and is being undertaken in fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy (PhD) degree in education.

### *Study procedures*

As a focus group participant in this study you will be invited to discuss with other students from your course and year the practical knowledge you possess as a graduating student in a range of areas. These include knowledge of students and student learning; of the teaching role and of yourself as a teacher; of curriculum, subject matter and subject-based pedagogies; and of school, community and classroom contexts

You will also be invited to discuss the experiences that have led to changes in your understandings, beliefs, images and practices of teaching through your teacher training course and the expectations that you have of teaching and schools as you enter the profession.

The discussion will be recorded on audio-tape and a summary of the findings of the discussion will be available to you should you wish to access these.

### *Payment to subjects*

Participation in this project will be voluntary and I am not able to offer you any payment.

### *Possible risks or discomforts*

It is possible that you may experience some discomfort in discussing teaching progress, given that the experiences of your practicums and internship may have made you aware of areas for development. You are, of course, at liberty not to discuss in the context of the group discussion, any matter which is private to you given that the anonymity of focus group members cannot be preserved

### *Confidentiality*

Research data will be held confidential whether stored on audio-tape, on computer files, or in hard copy. Only I will have access to raw data; and care will be taken to limit identification through codification of personal information. Information concerning focus group participants will not be available to other participants in the project and identification (by name, location, school or position) will be protected in the publication of analyses and interpretations.

As a focus group member you will be asked to keep confidential anything that is discussed in the course of the group discussion and not reveal it to people outside the group. Individual contributions to discussion during focus group meetings will not be identified in publication and data transcribed from the group discussion will be coded



to prevent identification by anyone other than other members who attended the discussion and me.

*Freedom to refuse or withdraw*

Your participation in this project as a member of a focus group is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without prejudice to assessment procedures at university or employment and assessment within the teaching service.

*Contact persons*

For further information about this project, please contact:

Professor John Williamson

Faculty of Education

University of Tasmania

Tel: 03 6324 3038

e-mail: [John.Williamson@utas.edu.au](mailto:John.Williamson@utas.edu.au)

*Concerns or complaints*

Any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted may be referred to:

Professor Roger Fay

Chair

Northern Tasmania Social Sciences

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

Telephone: 03 6324 3576

*Statement regarding approval*

This project has received ethical approval from the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee.

*Results of investigation*

You will be informed of the overall results of the study and any significant findings during the course of the study which may assist in your own professional development.

*Information sheet and statement of informed consent*

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and of the signed statement of informed consent for your own records.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

My contact details are as follows:

(home)

Tel: 02 6972 2810

Mob. 04 2872 2810

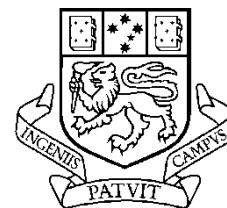
Email: [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au)

(work: West Wyalong Public School)

Tel: 02 6972 2157

Fax: 02 6972 2818

Email: [Marilyn.Pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Marilyn.Pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au)



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Focus group Members  
Statement of Informed Consent

Title of Project

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching

1. *I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.*
2. *The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.*
3. *I understand that the study involves the following procedures:*
  - a. Participation in focus groups to be held on campus at CSU (Wagga Wagga) at a time and place to be negotiated with the Course Coordinator;
  - b. These groups to be held in Semester 1 (pre-internship) and in Semester 2 (pre-teaching).
4. *Risks*
  - a. I understand that I may experience possible discomfort at times when discussing my teaching; and that it is permitted within the scope of the project that I not discuss any matter within the group which remains private to me.
  - b. I understand that there may be some risk of disclosure to others outside the group by other members of the group despite the researcher's caution to confidentiality
5. *Confidentiality*

I understand that all research data will be treated as confidential.
6. *Questions*

Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. *Agreement to publication of research data*

I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a subject
8. *Results of the Project*

I would like to receive the results of this project.      YES / NO

I would like to receive a copy of the results obtained from this project YES / NO

9. *Agreement to participate*

I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without prejudice to my academic standing or to my assessment as a probationary teacher.

*Name of subject* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of subject* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

10. *Statement by investigator*

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

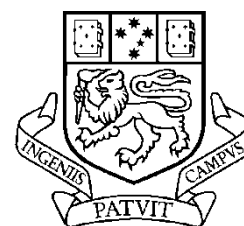
*Name of investigator*                      *Marilyn Pietsch*

*Signature of investigator* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*Appendix B2      Individual Interview Participants*

Information Sheet and Statement of Informed Consent:

Individual Interview Participants



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Information Sheet  
Individual Interview Participants  
Participation in Ethical Research

Title of Project

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in this project. The following points are intended to provide you with information to assist you in deciding whether or not to continue with your participation and participate in the long term case study.

*Background*

At present, I am employed by the NSW Department of Education and Training as principal at West Wyalong Public School and as such, I have been involved over several years with the internship program of CSU and with supporting beginning teachers. I am completing this project as part of my studies towards the award of a doctor in philosophy (PhD) degree in education at the University of Tasmania and as a way of assisting me to better support beginning teachers in my own school. I believe that in participating in such a study together we would be able to contribute to current understanding of the ways in which beginning teachers in New South Wales acquire knowledge of teaching, and thus also to identifying better ways in which other teachers in schools may best assist beginning teachers to move from novice to competent teacher during the early years of their careers. I believe it may also benefit participants to be involved in a project which assists them to reflect on their own experiences and perspectives as beginning teachers.

Marilyn Pietsch

*Name of chief investigator*

Professor John Williamson, as my supervisor, is the designated chief investigator while I will be the investigator to have direct involvement with research subjects.

*Purpose of the study*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which a small group of beginning teachers in New South Wales primary schools acquires practical knowledge of teaching and thus develops competency in the classroom in their initial

years of teaching in different teaching contexts as casual, temporary and permanent teachers.

The study will be based on the experience of beginning teachers in their initial years of primary teaching following the four-year Bachelor of Education (teacher training) course at Charles Sturt University-Riverina (Wagga Wagga) and is being undertaken in fulfillment of the requirements for a doctor of philosophy (PhD) degree in education.

#### *Study procedures*

As an individual participant in the long-term case study in this study you will be invited to discuss in two interviews each year over the course of 2003 – 2005 your perception of the development in your practical knowledge as you experience your initial years of teaching. This practical knowledge may include knowledge of students and student learning; of the teaching role and of you as a teacher; of curriculum, subject matter and subject-based pedagogies; and of school, community and classroom contexts

You will also be invited to discuss the experiences that have led to changes in your understandings, beliefs, images and practices of teaching and to reflect on the processes or incidents that you perceive to be most influential in assisting you to develop as a teacher.

The interview will be recorded on audio-tape and a copy of the transcript will be sent to you for verification, clarification and additional comment should you wish to add this.

In the course of the study, I would like to visit your classroom once each semester and observe you teaching. We would then be able to discuss what happens in your classroom and see how this correlates with your perceptions as expressed in interviews. Similarly I would like to examine with you the documentation you use to support your teaching (your program, daybook, assessment records, journals or other documents of your choosing) and see how these have developed over time.

#### *Payment to subjects*

Participation in this project will be voluntary and I am not able to offer you any payment.

#### *Possible risks or discomforts*

It is possible that you may experience some discomfort in discussing teaching progress, especially if during the course of the project you identify significant areas for development. It will be necessary that I maintain strict separation from your supervisor so as not to compromise your relationship or the assessment and review process (TARS) operating within your school. You may also find it uncomfortable to have me observing your lessons or discussing your documentation. Such discomfort can be a source of discussion and negotiation between us in order to meet both the needs of the project and your own needs as a developing teacher.

*Confidentiality*

Research data will be held confidential whether stored on audio-tape, on computer files, or in hard copy. Only you and I will have access to raw data; and care will be taken to limit identification through codification of personal information.

Information concerning individual interview participants will not be available to other participants in the project and identification (by name, location, school or position) will be protected in the publication of analyses and interpretations.

*Freedom to refuse or withdraw*

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without prejudice to assessment procedures at university or employment and assessment within the teaching service.

*Contact persons*

For further information about this project, please contact:

Professor John Williamson

Faculty of Education

University of Tasmania

Tel: 03 6324 3038

e-mail: [John.Williamson@utas.edu.au](mailto:John.Williamson@utas.edu.au)

*Concerns or complaints*

Any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted may be referred to:

Professor Roger Fay

Chair , Northern Tasmania Social Sciences

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

Telephone: 03 6324 3576

*Statement regarding approval*

This project has received ethical approval from the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee.

*Results of investigation*

You will be informed of the overall results of the study and any significant findings during the course of the study which may assist in your own professional development.

*Information sheet and statement of informed consent*

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and of the signed statement of informed consent for your own records.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

My contact details are as follows:

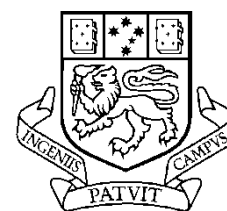
(home) Tel: 02 6972 2810; Mob. 04 2872 2810

Email: [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au)

(work: West Wyalong Public School)

Tel: 02 6972 2157; Fax: 02 6972 2818

Email: [Marilyn.Pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Marilyn.Pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au)



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Individual Participants  
Statement of Informed Consent

Title of Project

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching

1. *I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.*
2. *The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.*
3. *I understand that the study involves the following procedures:*
  - a) Consultation with the researcher by face-to-face or telephone interviews over a period of two years on approximately six occasions and involving audio-taping of interviews where possible;
  - b) Access to, and opportunity for, correction and elaborations of, transcriptions of tapes of interviews;
  - c) Joint analysis and interpretation of transcriptions of interviews;
  - d) Classroom observation at mutually agreed times prior to interview, using video-taping if agreed, and subsequent joint analysis and interpretation of lesson strategies and outcomes;
  - e) Documentary analysis (programming and student assessment documents) as agreed;
  - f) Joint discussion of final analysis and interpretation of data before publication
4. *Risks*

I understand that I may experience possible discomfort at times when discussing my teaching; or when the researcher is observing my teaching or my documentation, and that I may discuss with the researcher the causes I perceive of this discomfort and ways to limit it within the scope of the project.
5. *Confidentiality*

I understand that all research data will be treated as confidential.
6. *Questions*

Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.



7. *Agreement to publication of research data*

I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided that I cannot be identified as a subject

8. *Results of the Project*

I would like to receive a copy of the results of this project. YES / NO

9. *Agreement to participate*

I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw at any time without prejudice to my academic standing or to my assessment as a probationary teacher.

*Name of subject* \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of subject* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

10. *Statement by investigator*

I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe that the consent is informed and that he / she understands the implications of participation.

*Name of investigator* Marilyn Pietsch

*Signature of investigator* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C      Interview Schedules

Appendix C1      Schedule for Focus Group Interview

Appendix C2      Schedule for Individual Interviews

*Appendix C1      Schedule for Focus Group Interview*

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching

Interview schedule: Focus Group Members

Initial Meeting: Students in 2002 student group (Charles Sturt University)

It is intended to use a focus approach at the beginning of the project to acquaint potential participants with the project and to give them a basis on which to make a decision as to whether to proceed as long-term participants in the case study. In the course of this focus group meeting, I propose to ask of the group the following general questions to provide a larger sample of initial understandings.

1. What is teaching?
2. How would you describe a good teacher?
3. In your own teaching (practicums), what do you know you do well?
4. How do you hope to be different as a teacher in five years' time?
5. How do you think those changes will have come about?
6. What sort of support do you think you will need (or hope you will get) in order to make those changes?

*Appendix C2      Schedule for Individual Interviews*

## Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching

### Interview Schedule: Individual Participants

The focus of each semi-structured interview with individual teachers will be to elucidate any changes perceived by the participant in their knowledge in the following areas; to examine any experiences which can be identified as precipitating change; to explore the way in which new knowledge was adopted; to explore the implications of new knowledge for classroom practice; and to seek evidence of the confidence with which new knowledge has been acquired and translated into teaching practice through classroom observation and analysis, through examination of student assessment records (profiles, work samples and assessment procedures) and through examination of documentation such as teaching-learning programs and teachers' day books and journals.

These interviews will be held at a time and place mutually agreed upon between interviewer and teacher. Where interviews are to be held at school, permission will need to be sought also from the principal of the school and times will need to be arranged which do not conflict with the teaching responsibilities of the participants. Where distance precludes face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews may be arranged for some interviews although it is recognized that face-to-face interviews should be held in the early stages of the project to establish rapport, trust and understanding between researcher and teacher.

#### *Areas of Learning*

(1) The institutional context

1. *What instances can you give of a change in your knowledge or understanding of the way in which the school works?*
2. *How has this change in knowledge come about?*
3. *To what extent has this change led you to make changes in your classroom-teaching?*

Further probes may be required to elicit perceptions in regard to the following:

- Changes in knowledge of the school as a social system;
- Changes in understanding of the expectations and requirements of the community of which the school is a part;
- Change in knowledge of the positioning of the school within the district and state systems with regard to particular policies;
- Change in knowledge of informal and formal school policies and procedures;
- Change in understanding of the culture (values, norms of behaviour, and expectations) of the personnel within the school community (staff, parents and community members involved with the school)..

(2) The personal context: beliefs, attitudes, images and metaphors concerning teaching and teachers

1. *Could we look at making a concept map of your views of “teaching”?*
  - *(As the project proceeds): How is this concept map different from previous ones?*
  - *What events or occurrences have led you to making these changes?*
2. *How would you describe now yourself as a teacher?*

Further probes may be required to elicit perceptions in regard to the following:

- Changes in self in relation to personal life and the impact on work life;
- Perceptions of self-efficacy as a teacher;
- Changes in personal goals in relation to work and personal lives;
- Changes in understandings of the role of a teacher;
- Changes in images of teachers and teaching and of the self as a teacher;
- Changes in perceptions of career;
- Changes in ideals and beliefs about teaching and teachers;
- Concerns about perceived dissonance between ideals and practice.

(3) The professional context: subject-knowledge; curricular knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge

1. *How has your knowledge of “what to teach” and “how to teach it” changed and how has this impacted on your programming and lesson planning?*
2. *How has your knowledge of students and student learning changed and how has this impacted on your teaching and management?*
3. *What changes have you made to your classroom organization, routines and management strategies and what prompted you to make these changes?*

Further probes may be required to elicit perceptions in regard to the following:

- Changes in knowledge of subject-matter, of state-wide and school curricula;
- Changes in knowledge of subject-based pedagogies;
- Changes in repertoire of strategies and instructional techniques;
- Changes of classroom organization and management routines and strategies;
- Changes in understanding of student diversity;
- Changes in knowledge of how students learn;
- Changes in understanding of links between teaching, evaluating, assessing and learning.

(4) The cognitive context: (how knowledge is acquired): the application of theories of cognition to the processes of learning to teach

1. *What are some instances in your teaching experience that have prompted you to change your thinking about your practice of teaching?*
2. *How do you think you come to a decision that you need to “find out more”?*
3. *Where do you go for assistance in gaining new information?*

Further probes may be required to elicit perceptions in regard to the following:

- Articulation of a process of reflection-in-practice and pedagogical reasoning;

- Identification of any unexpected and unanticipated experiences that precipitated re-thinking; awareness of any dissonance between the known, the planned and the outcome;
- Articulation of a personal decision-making process which resulted in identification of changes in understanding, knowledge or skills.

It is anticipated that if the same areas are considered in a succession of interviews over time, these will provide both a framework for the identification of changes in specific areas and also for individual reflection on work done by the teacher between interviews.



Appendix D Case Study Participants' Concept Maps and PMI Charts

*Concept Maps and PMI Charts as Data Collection Instruments**Concept Maps*

Case study participants constructed a concept map during each interview. These were intended to provide time for participants to think and reflect on their professional journey with minimal input or stimulus from the researcher. Six participants completed three maps and a Plus-Minus-Interesting chart each (Alison, Bianca, Cate; Evan, Fiona and Graham). Dianne completed two maps; and Helen completed only one, at the interview conducted at the end of her first year of teaching.

The following concept maps have been transcribed from the handwritten maps in order to preserve teacher anonymity. However, the transcription has been made faithfully within the limitations of the drawing program with regard to the placement of concepts, the differentiation by size or font of writing, the use of lines, curves and uni- and bi-directional arrows to join concepts, and the naming and description of concepts.

Although transcripts were returned for comment to participants, concept maps were retained by the researcher and were used again in the next interview. Having completed a new concept map, teachers were then invited to review their previous one and to consider any difference that they noticed. Participants were invited to “think aloud” when constructing and reviewing concept maps so that their thinking could be recorded.

The concept maps appear to be somewhat skeletal representations of teachers’ thinking, but in each case they encapsulate the essence of teachers’ priorities in classrooms at the time of construction and are closely aligned to the visible classroom climate and environment being established by each teacher and observed by the researcher. As such they provide a valuable and insightful record into the changing beliefs, understandings and experiences of each teacher.

The following concept maps are presented in chronological order, that is, the initial concept map for each teacher is presented followed by the set of second maps and

finally, the set of third maps where teachers were available. The sets may be examined chronologically or the set of maps belonging to each participant may be examined.

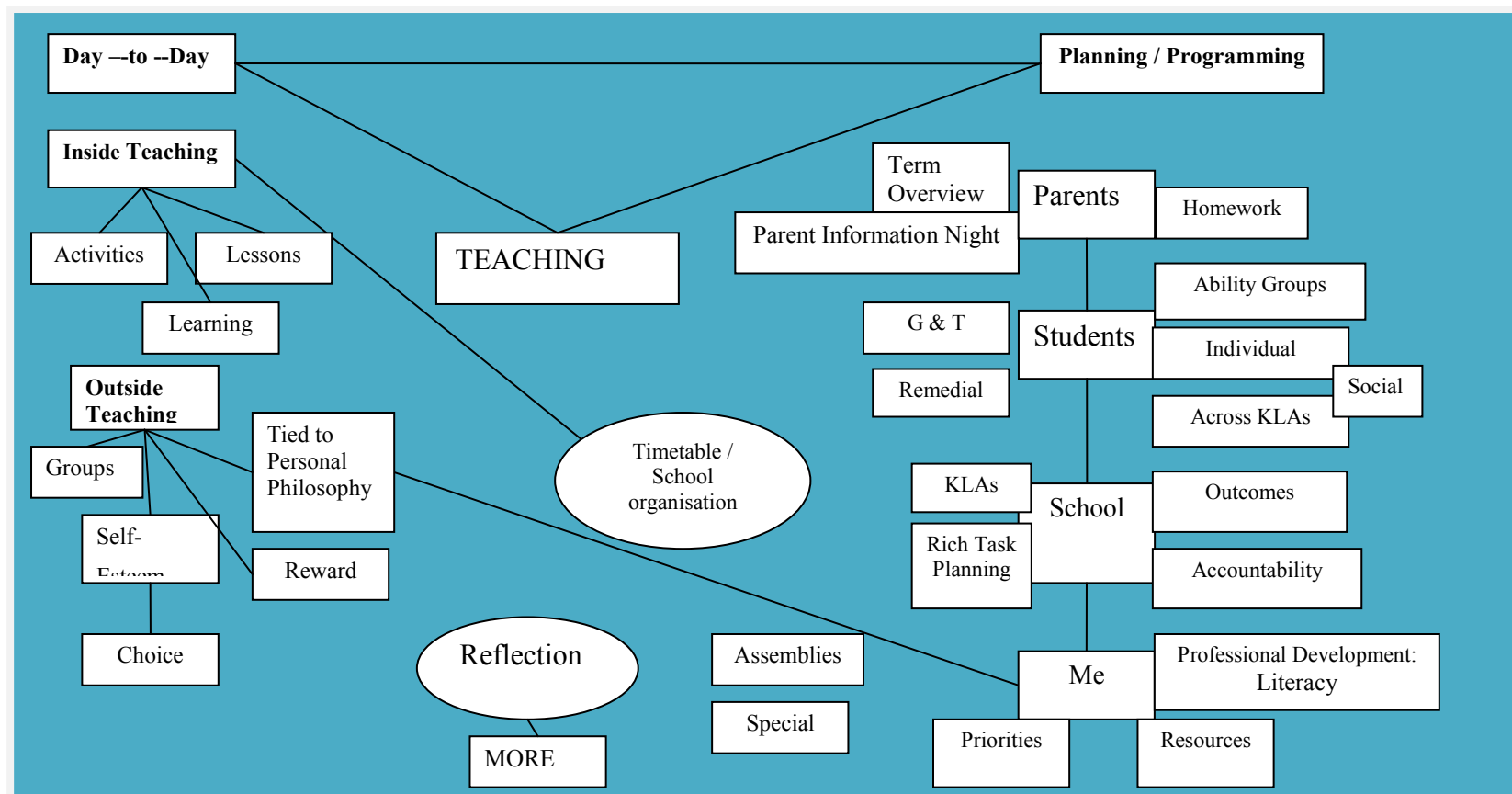
In the case of Fiona and Graham, who started teaching mid-year, the first concept map was made at the completion of their internship and just before they began a short-term contract. Its representations are closer to the views of Alison, Bianca and Cate expressed in the focus group interview. However, the second concept maps for all teachers are aligned and represent teaching experience at the end of a semester (two terms) of teaching. Third maps were devised between the end of the sixth and the end of the seventh term of teaching (that is, towards the end of the second year of teaching). At this stage, Dianne had gone overseas and was no longer able to participate. As well, it was possible to interview Helen only once and the researcher's work commitments made it impossible to consider the three days necessary for travel in order to visit Helen at school. Her one very long and comprehensive interview was undertaken on a Saturday when both Helen and the researcher were free from work commitments. Helen's interview and concept map was a summative one, completed at the end of her first year of teaching. At this stage, the PMI had not been introduced to the interview process and hence Helen did not complete one.

#### *Plus-Minus-Interesting Charts (PMI)*

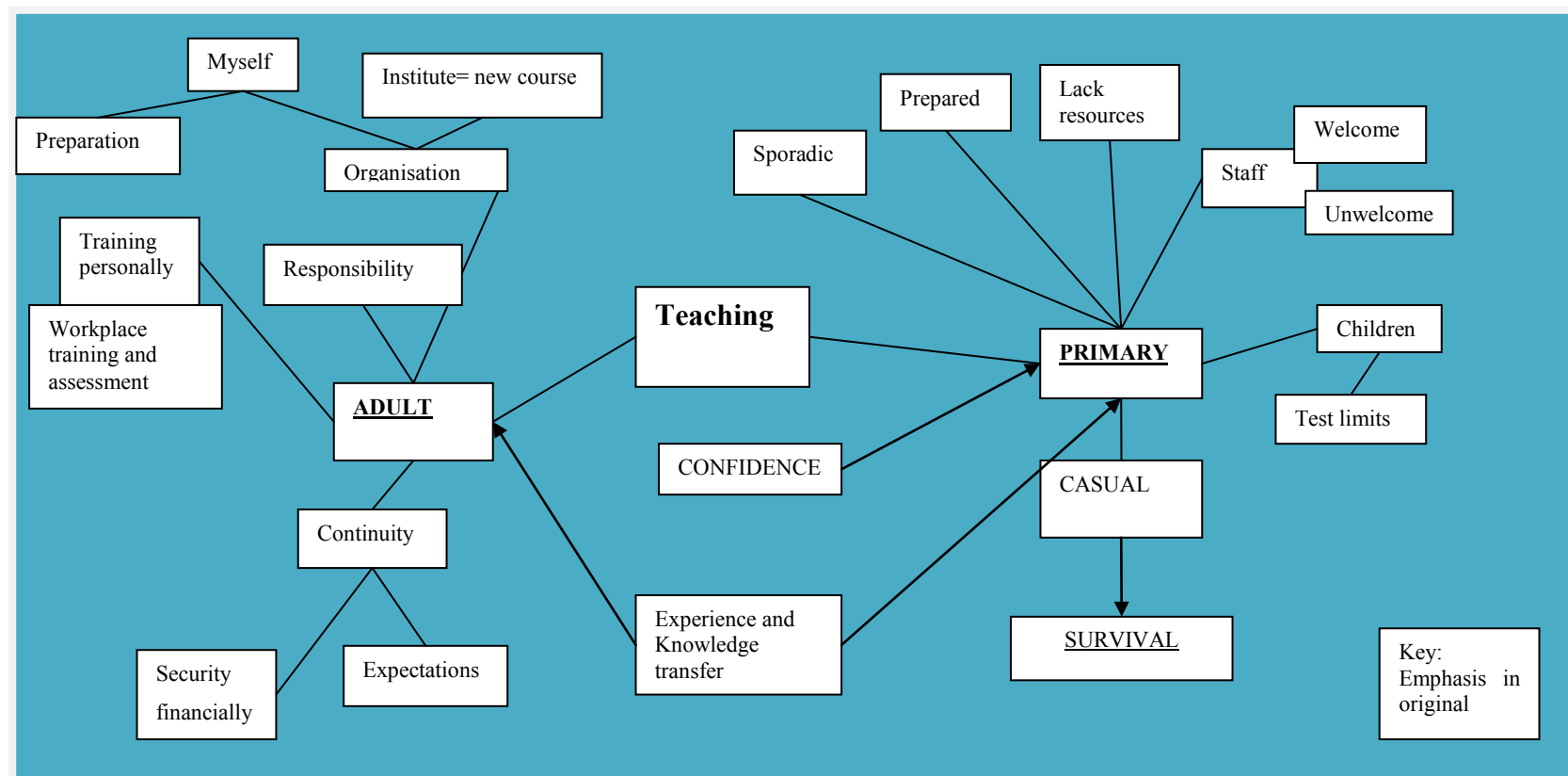
These were completed as a summative activity during the final interview and again were intended to be open-ended, teacher-initiated reflections on the key points reflections of their first two years of teaching. They were intended to give participants a final opportunity to reflect in summary on the positives, the negatives and the unexpected of their early career.

### *Initial Concept Maps*

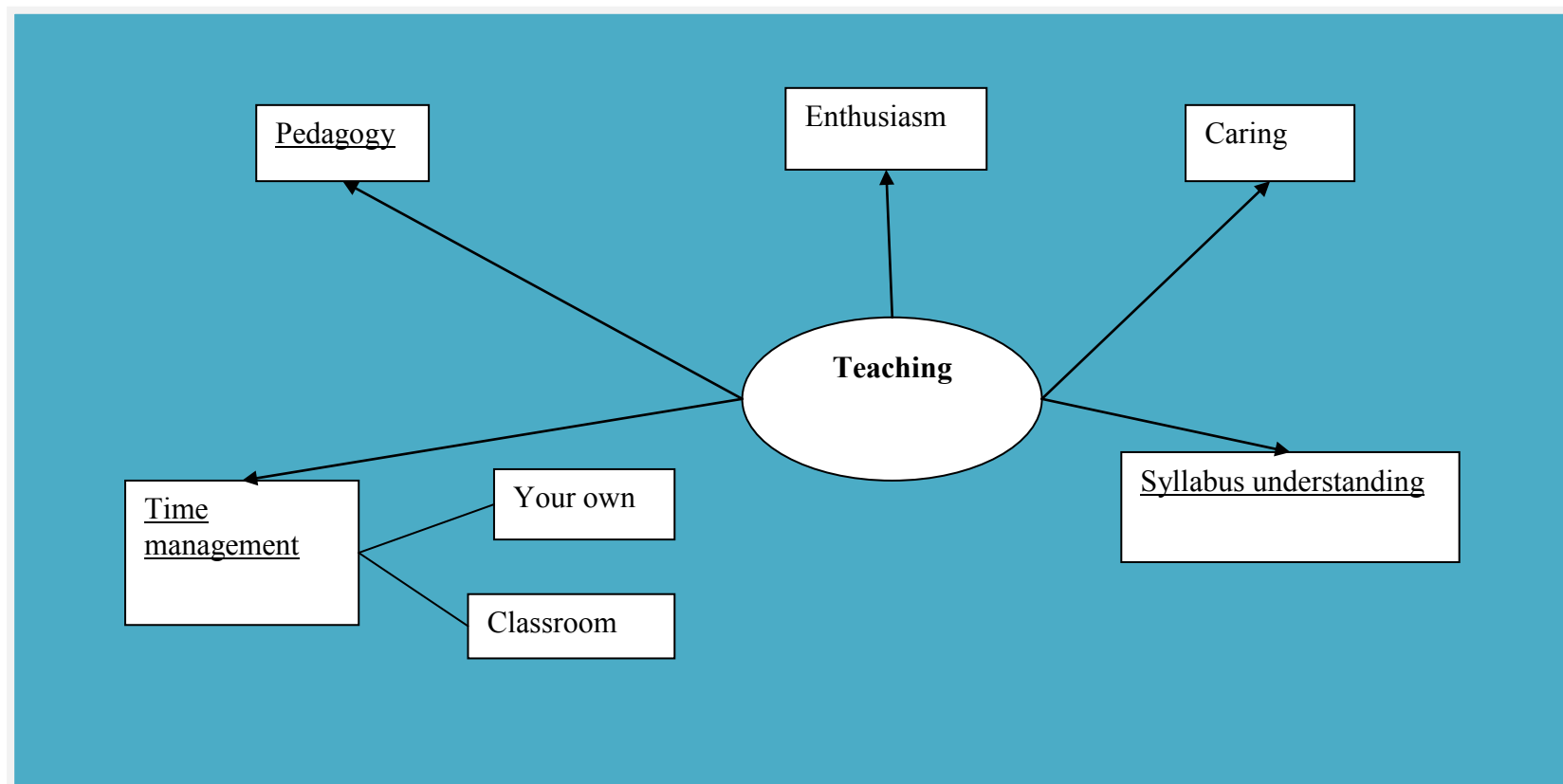
*Initial Concept Map: Alison*



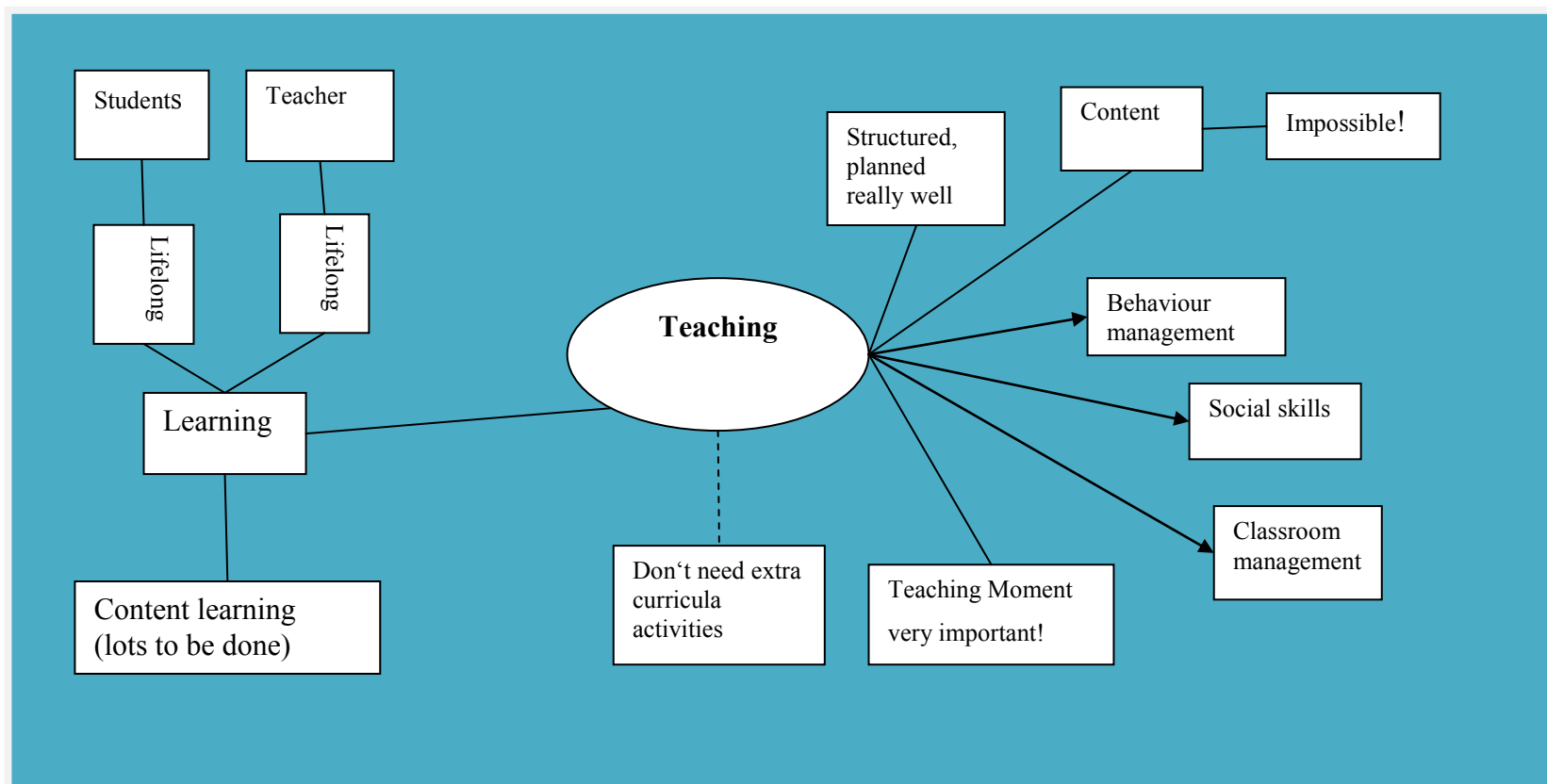
*Initial Concept Map: Bianca*



*Initial Concept Map: Cate*

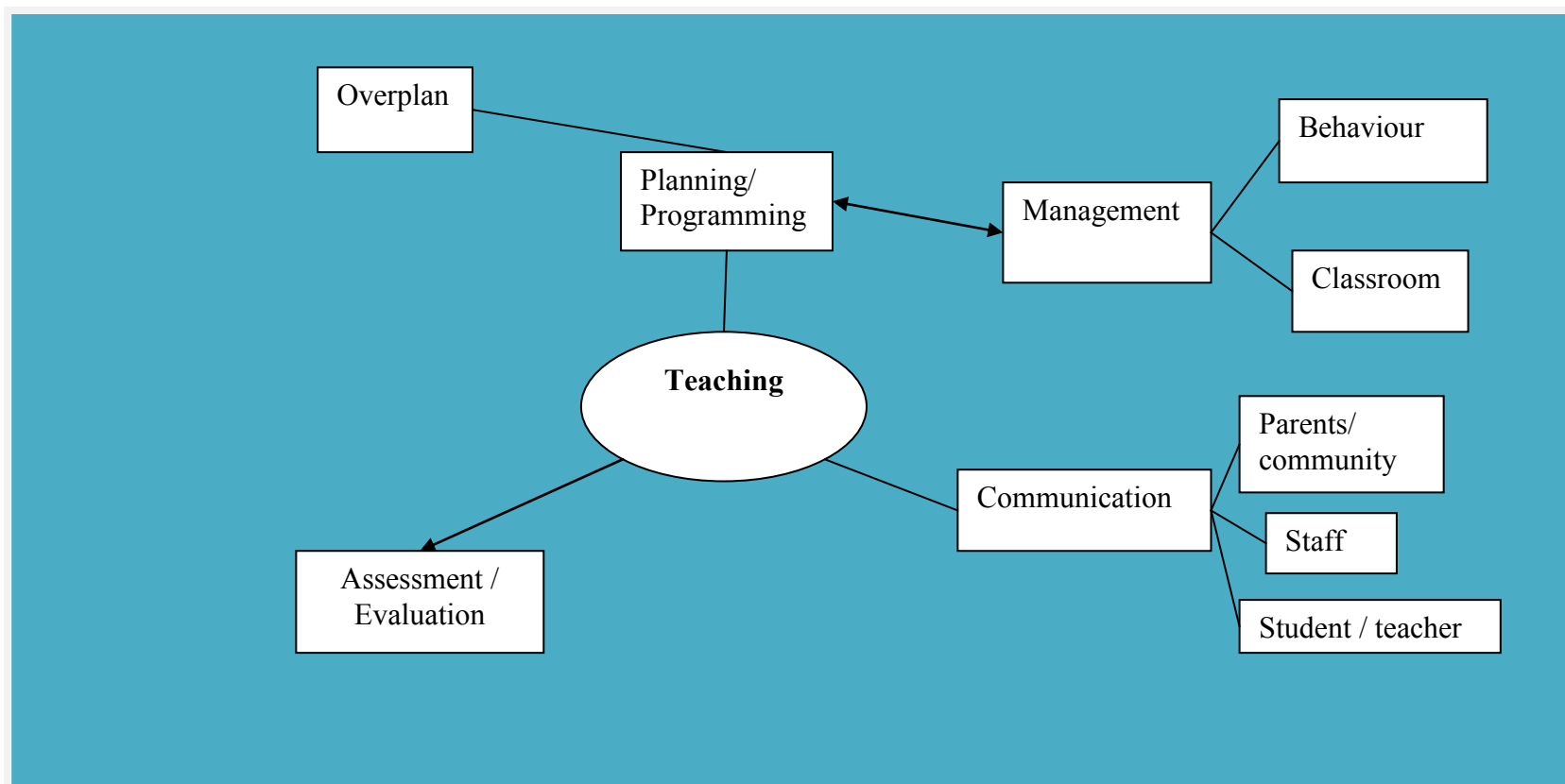


*Initial Concept Map: Dianne*

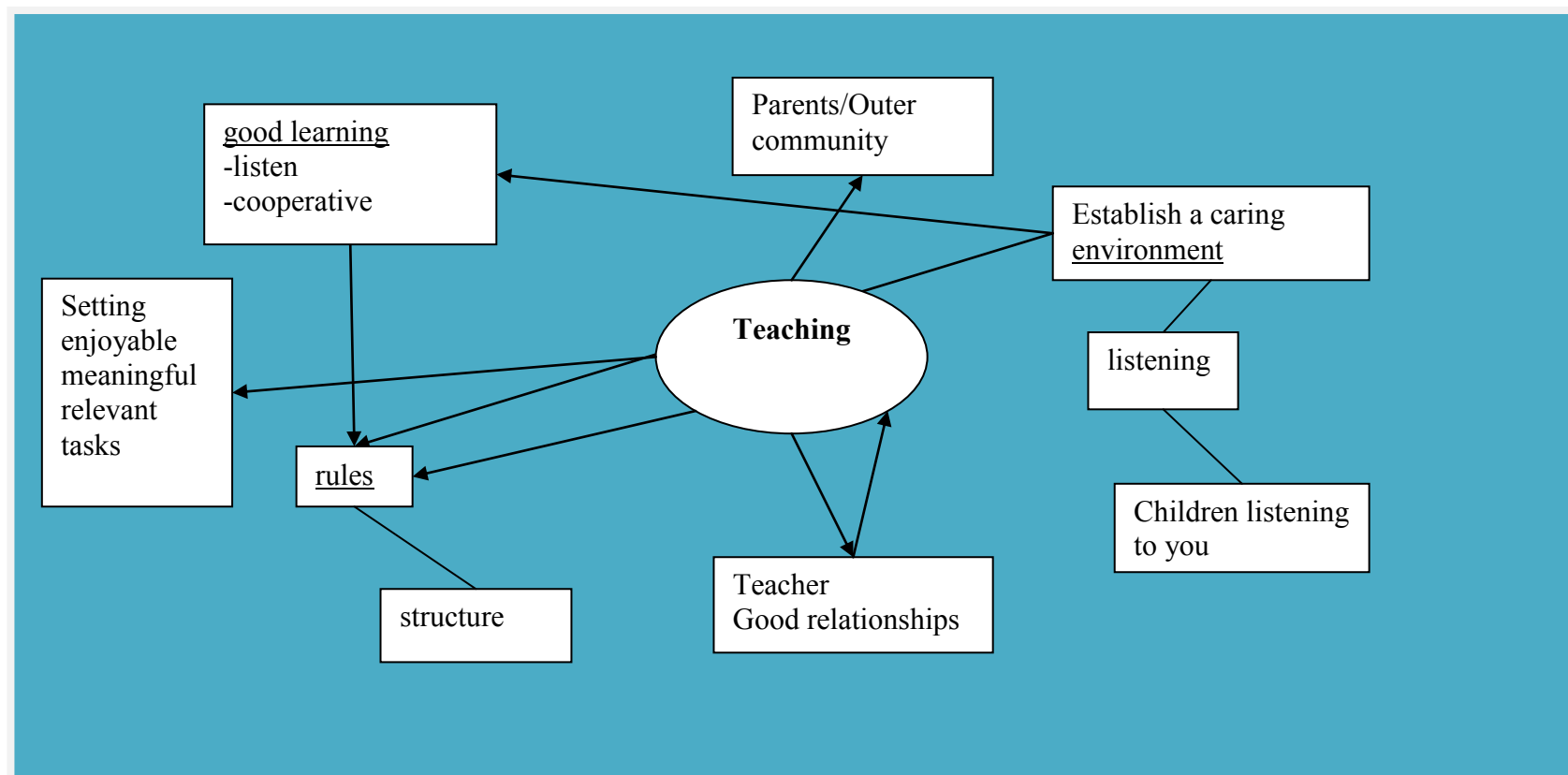




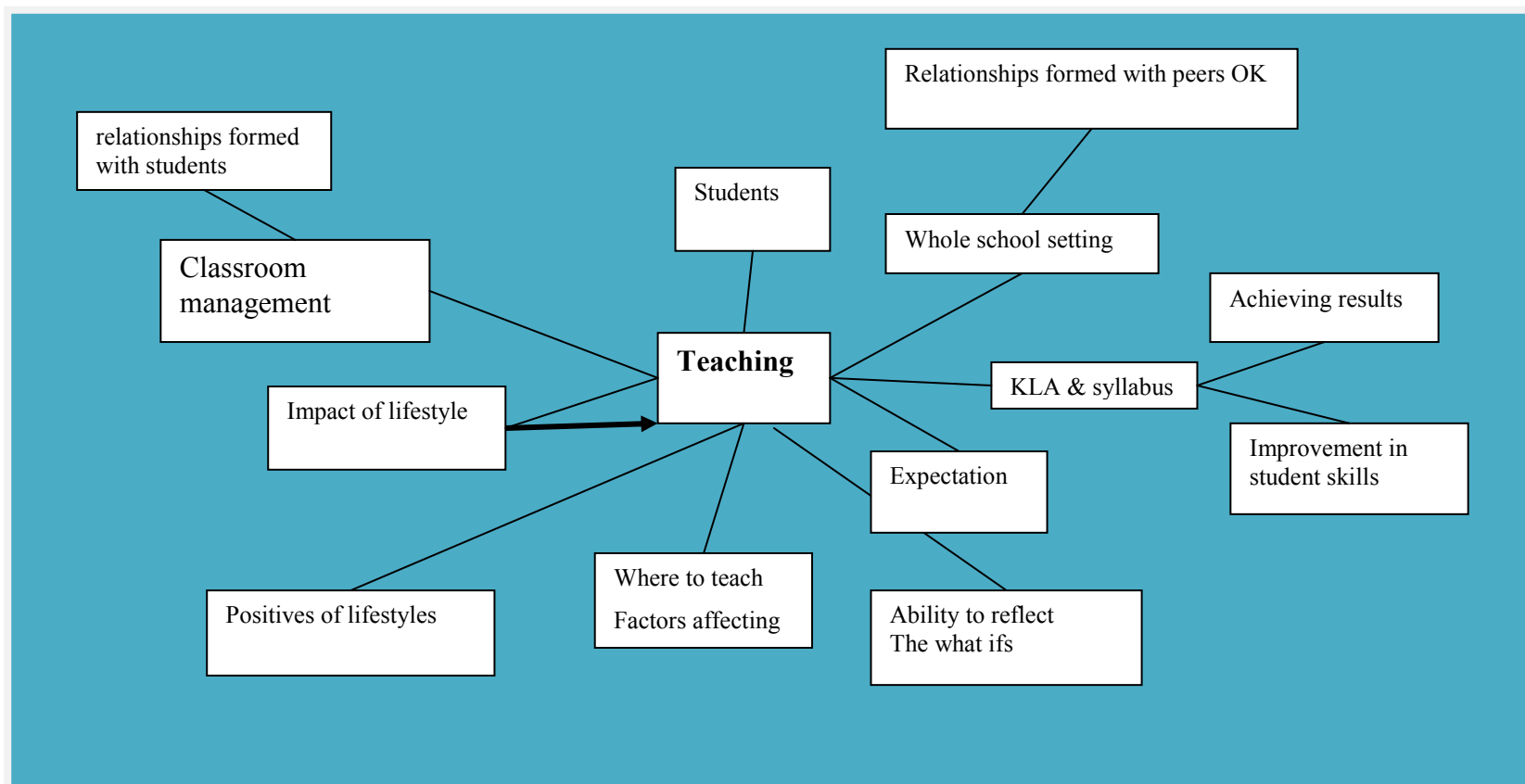
*Initial Concept Map: Evan*



*Initial Concept Map: Fiona*

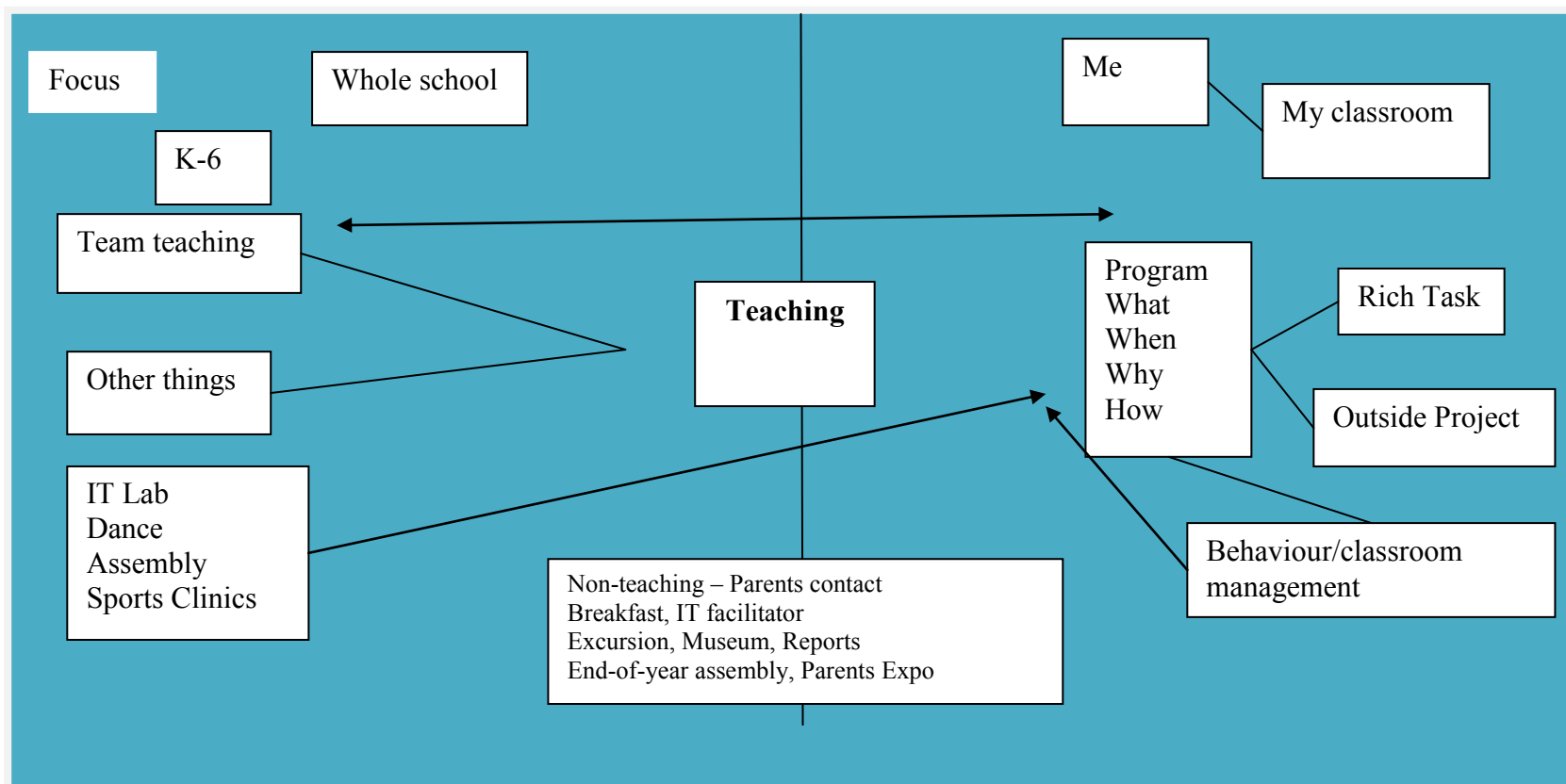


*Initial Concept Map: Graham*

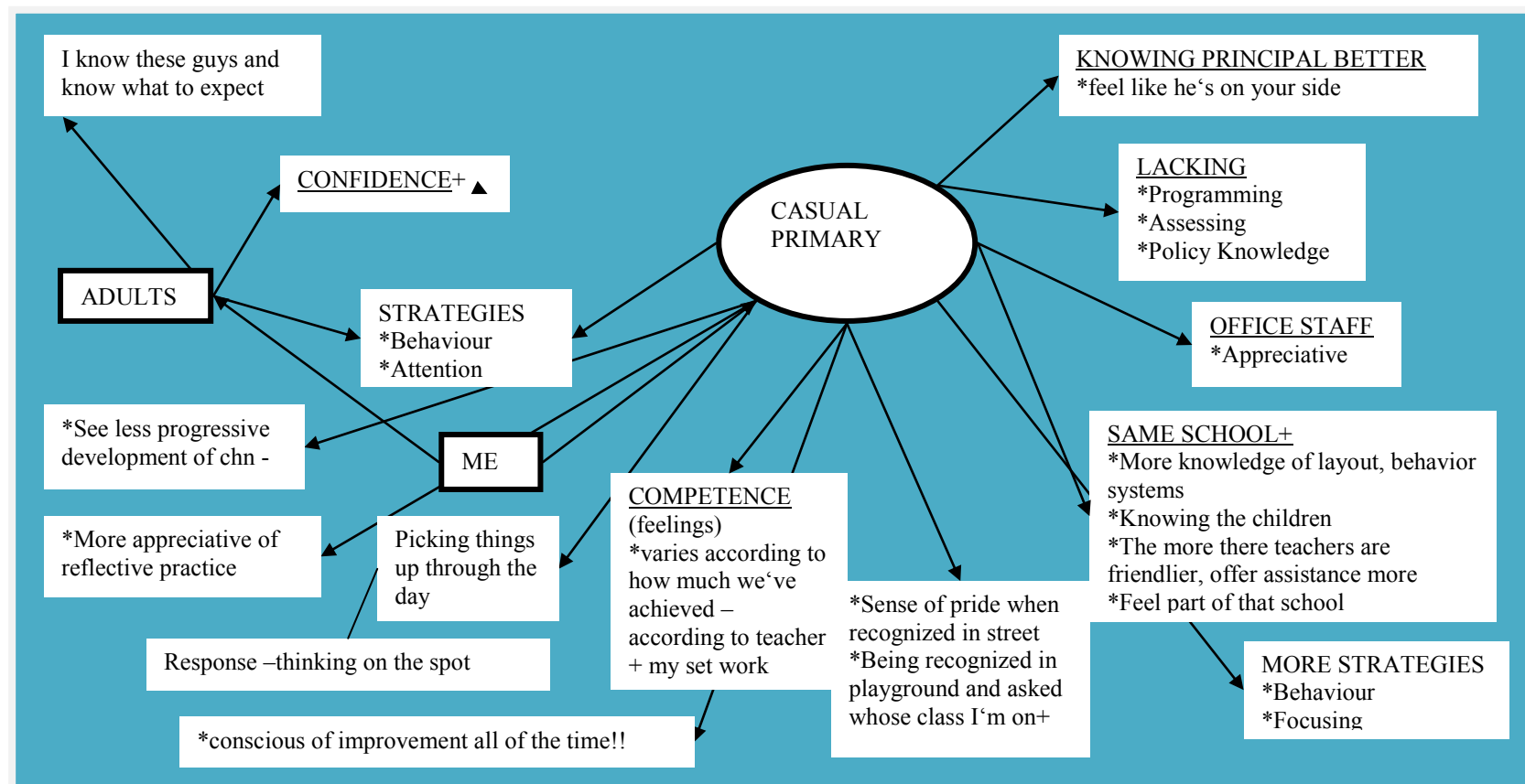


*Second Concept Maps*

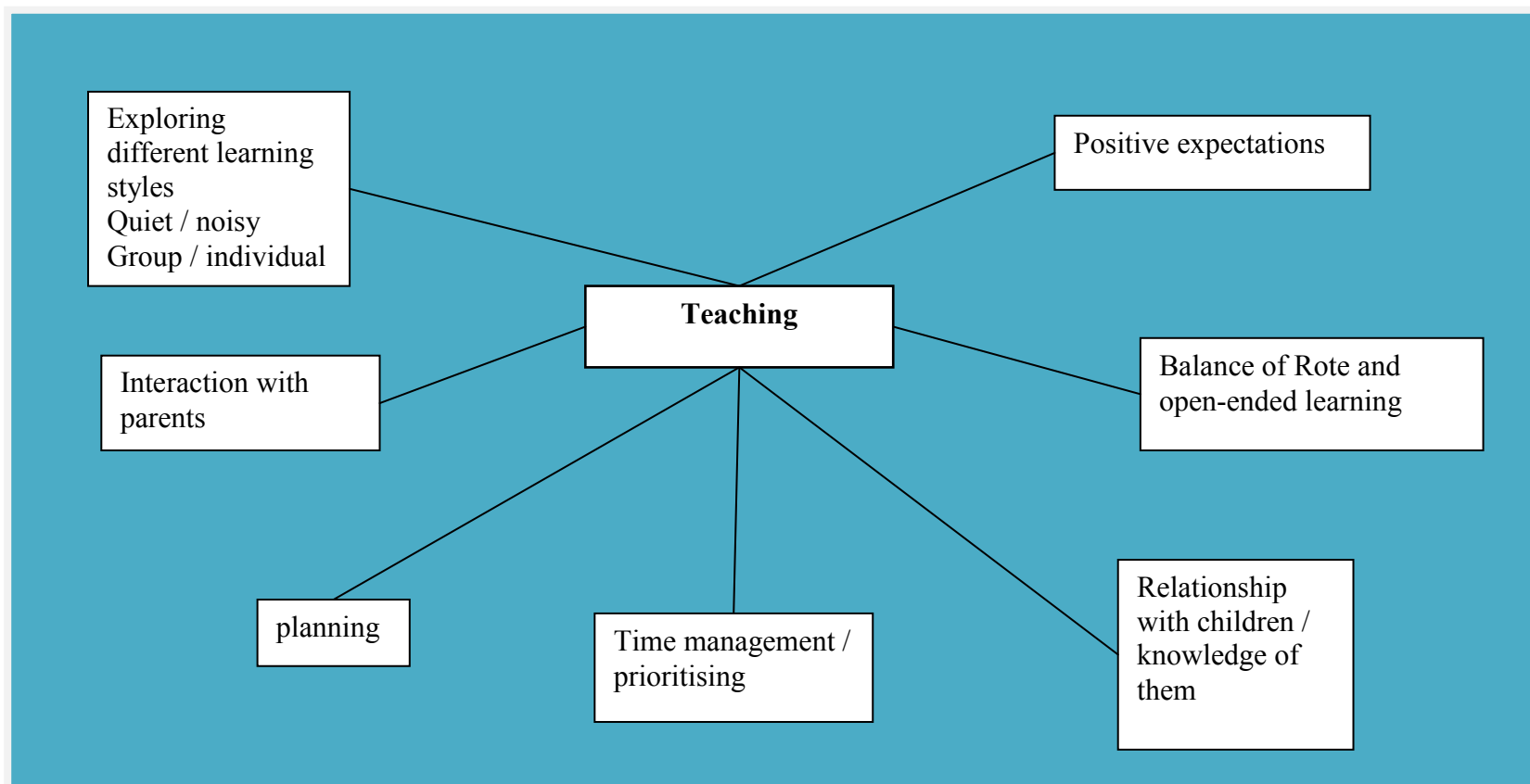
*Second Concept Map: Alison*



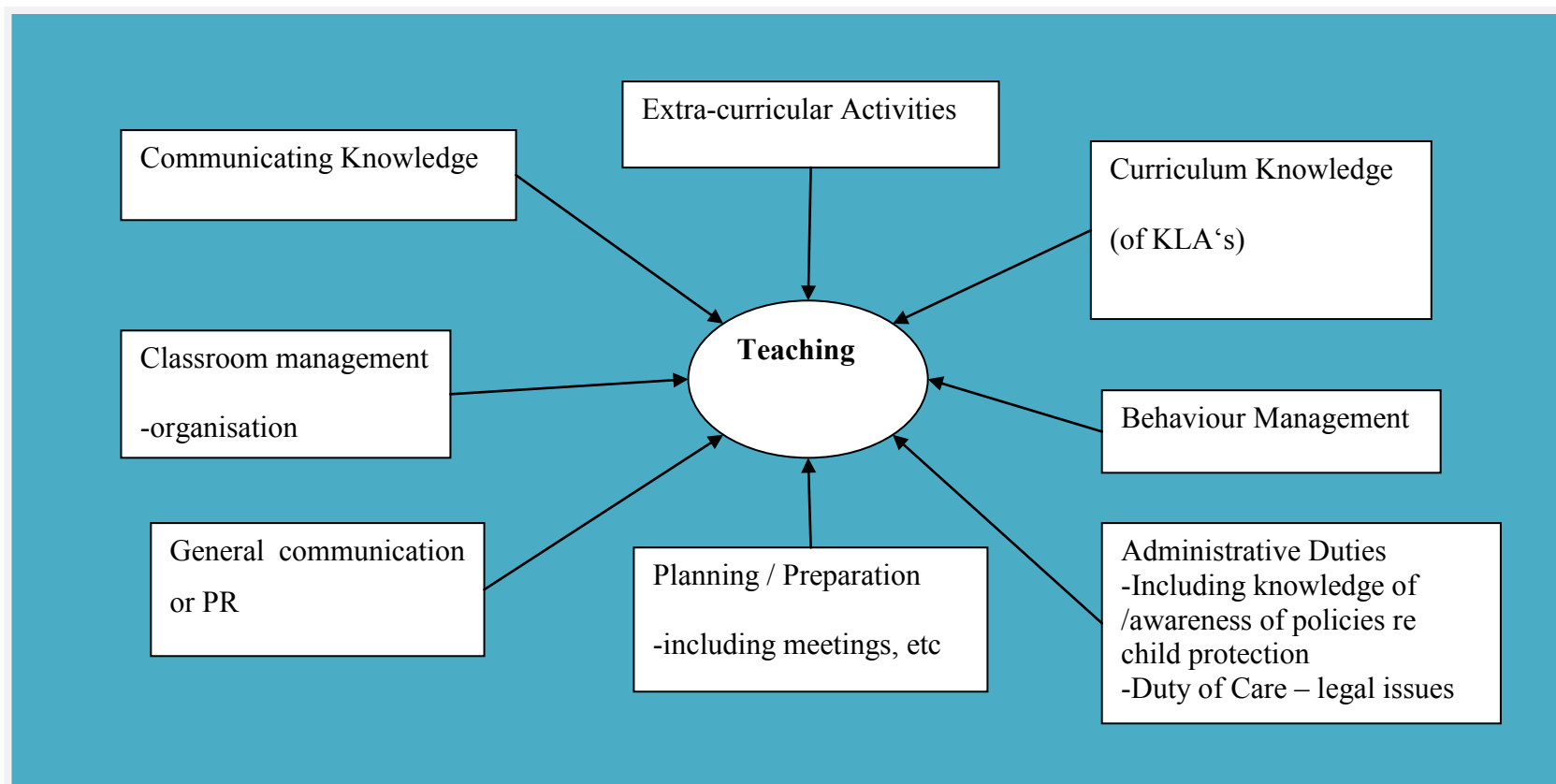
Second Concept Map: Bianca



*Second Concept Map: Cate*

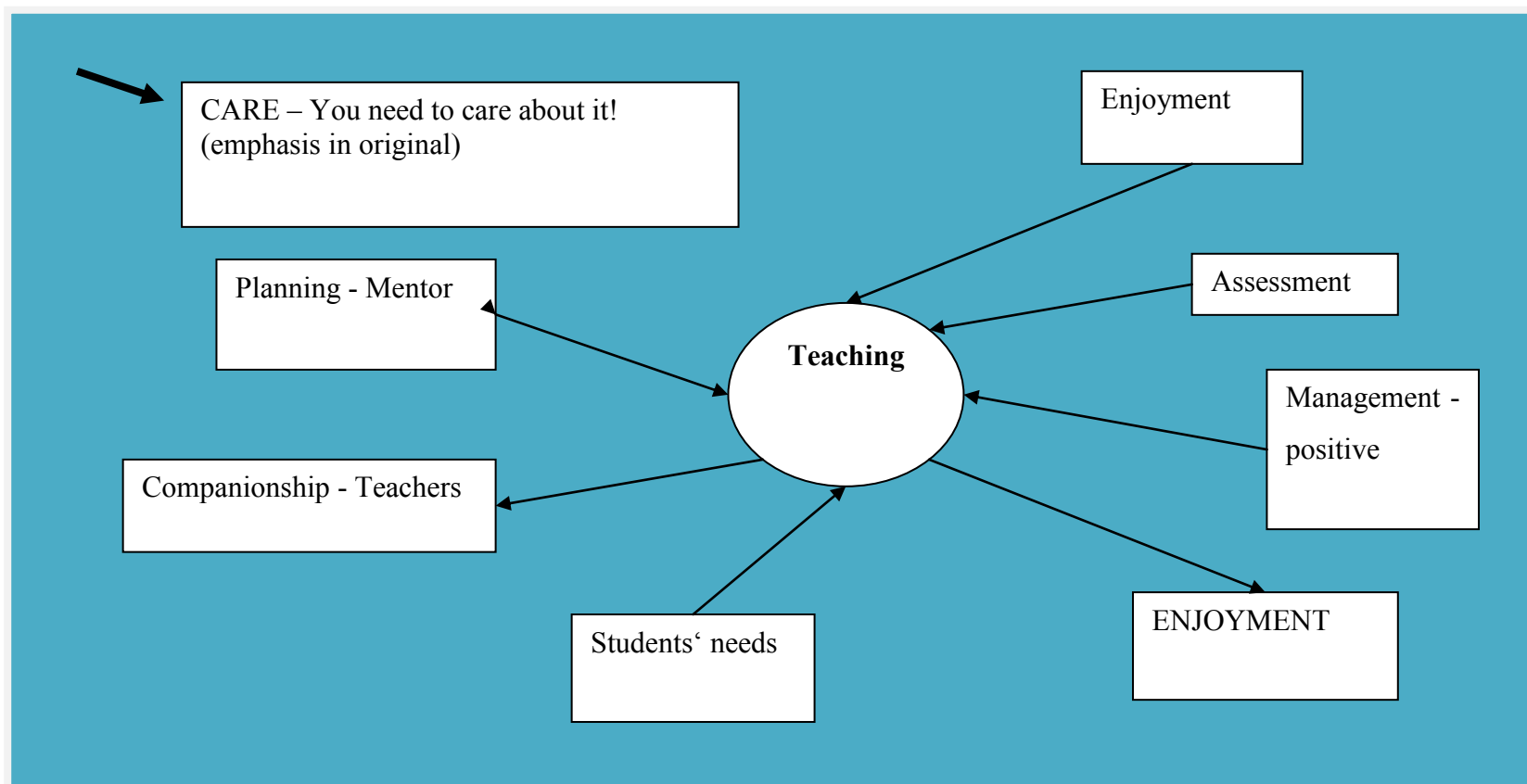


*Second Concept Map: Dianne*

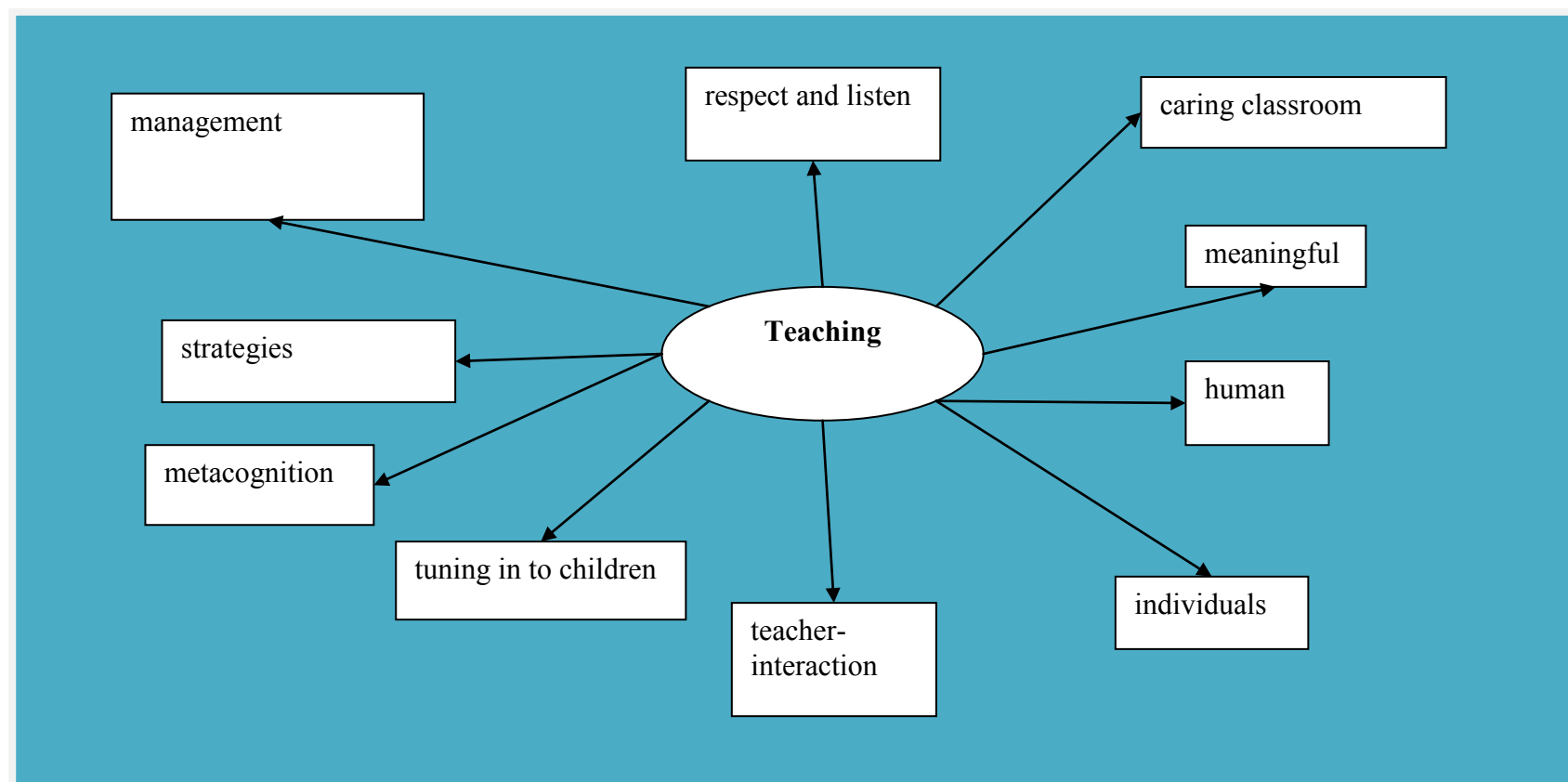




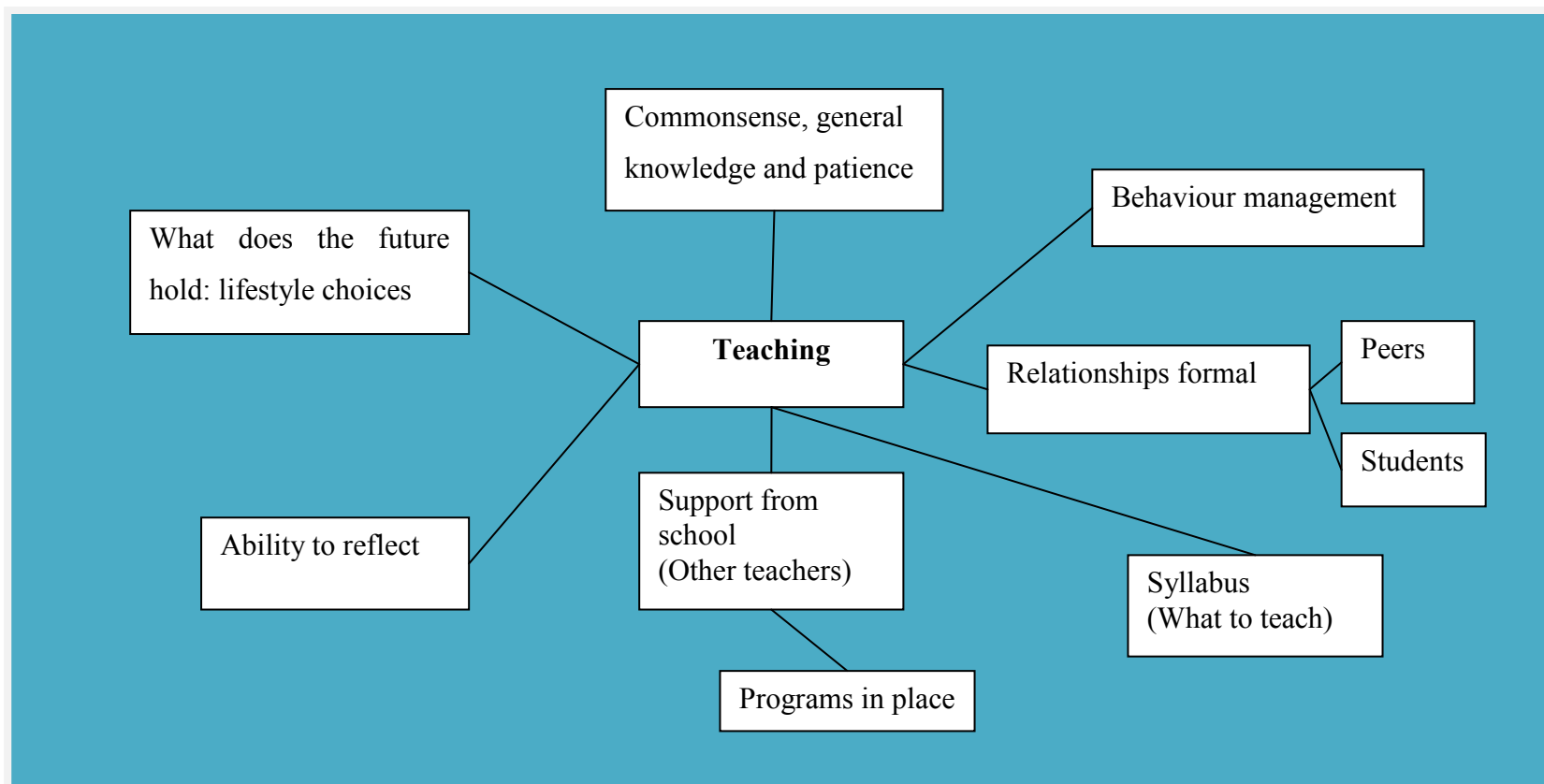
*Second Concept Map: Evan*



*Second Concept Map: Fiona*



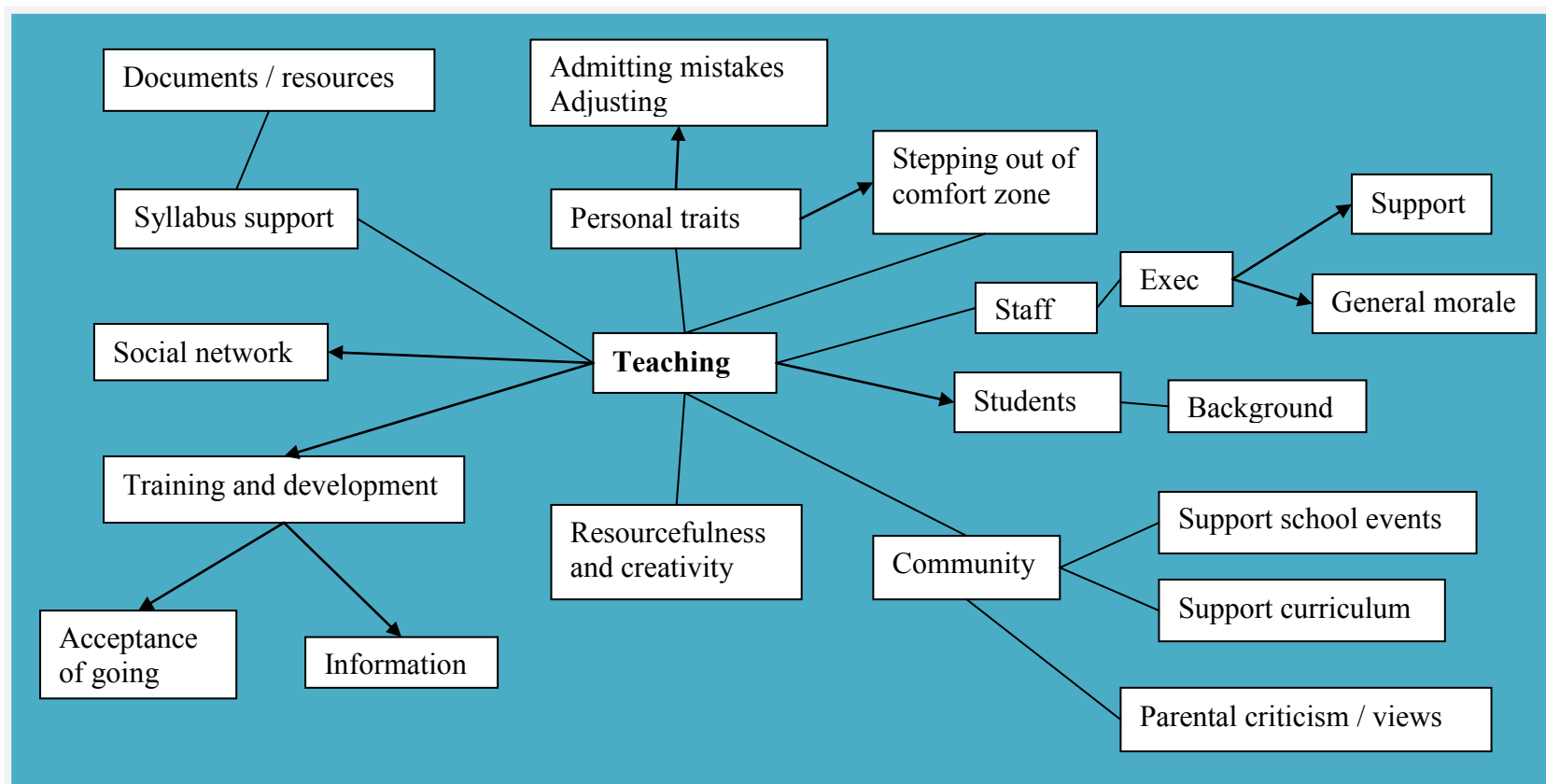
*Second Concept Map: Graham*



*Phase 2 Concept Map*

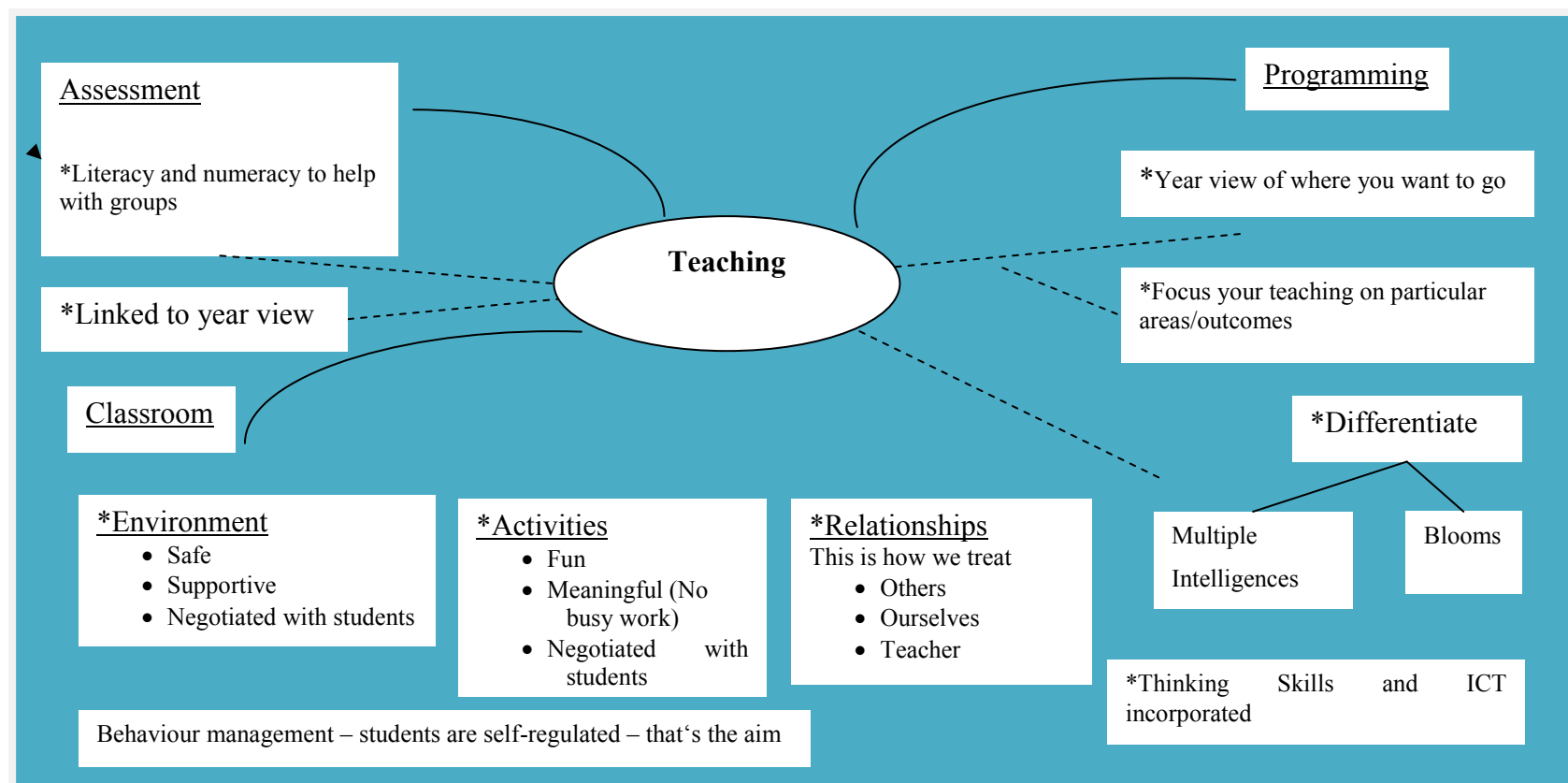
Only one interview was conducted with Helen because of the limitations of distance and time. In the course of the interview, conducted at the end of her first year of teaching, she constructed a concept map which aligned her experience with that of other case study participants at the end of Phase 2.

Phase 2 Concept Map: Helen

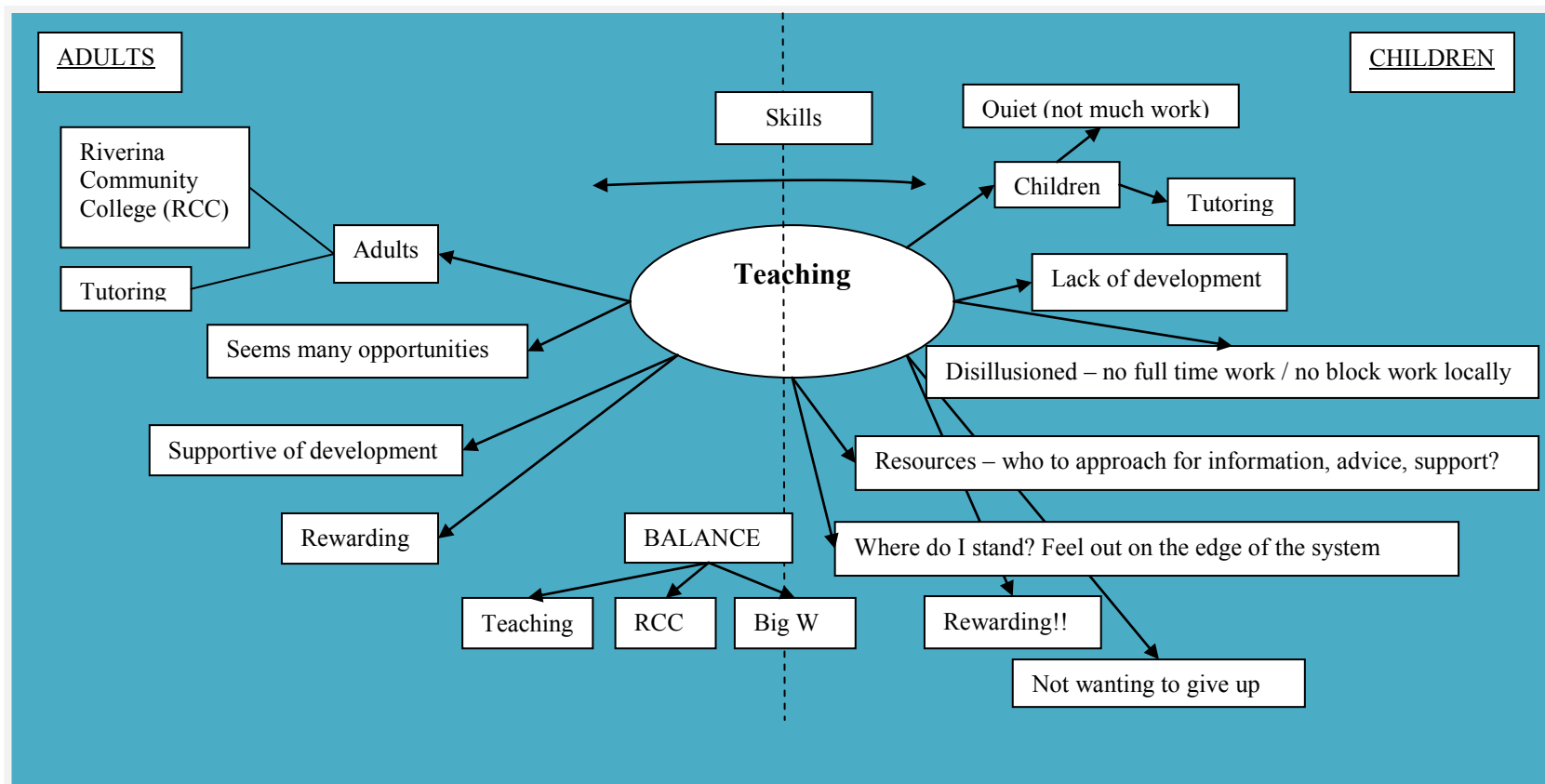


*Third Concept Maps*

Third Concept Map: Alison

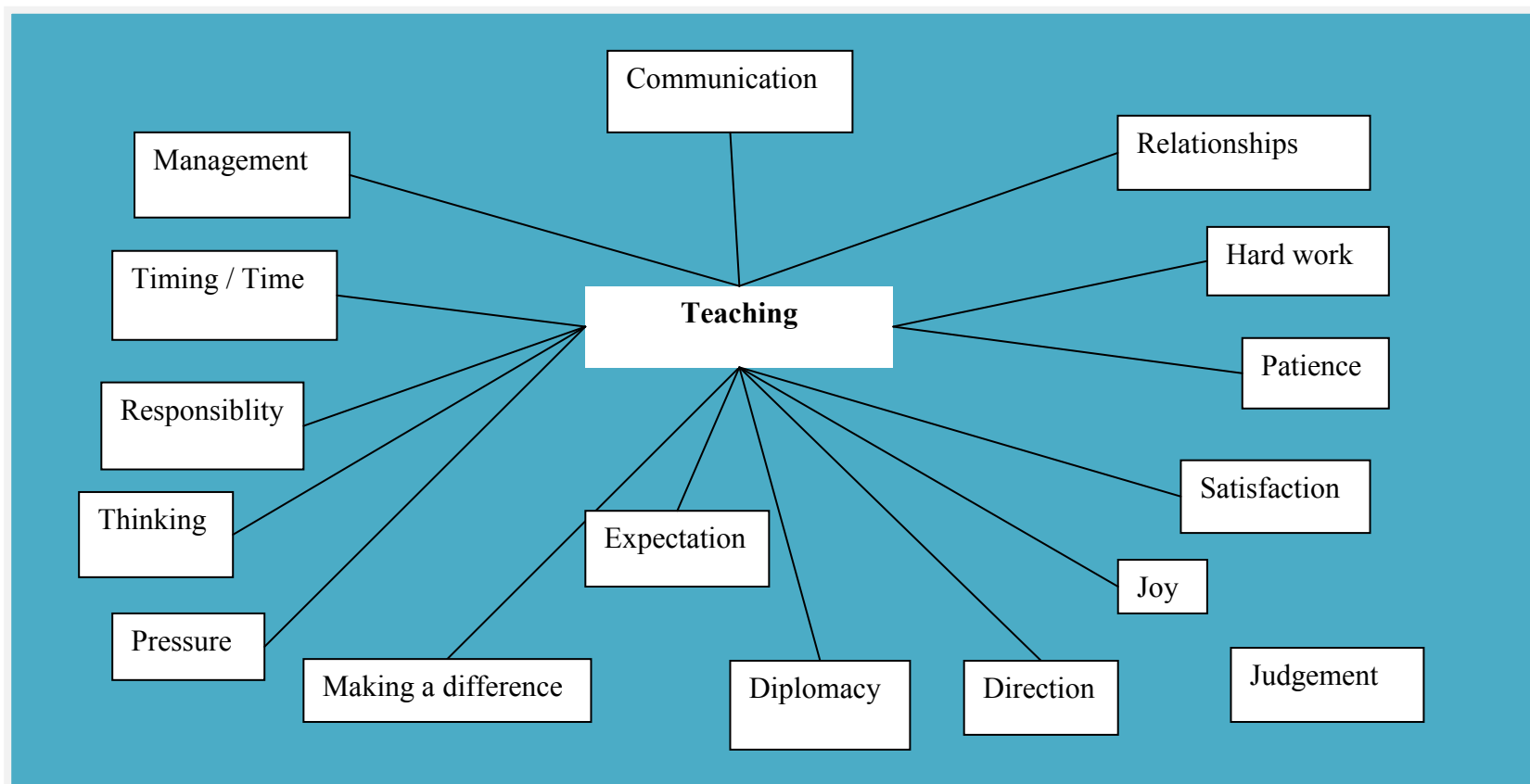


*Third Concept Map: Bianca*

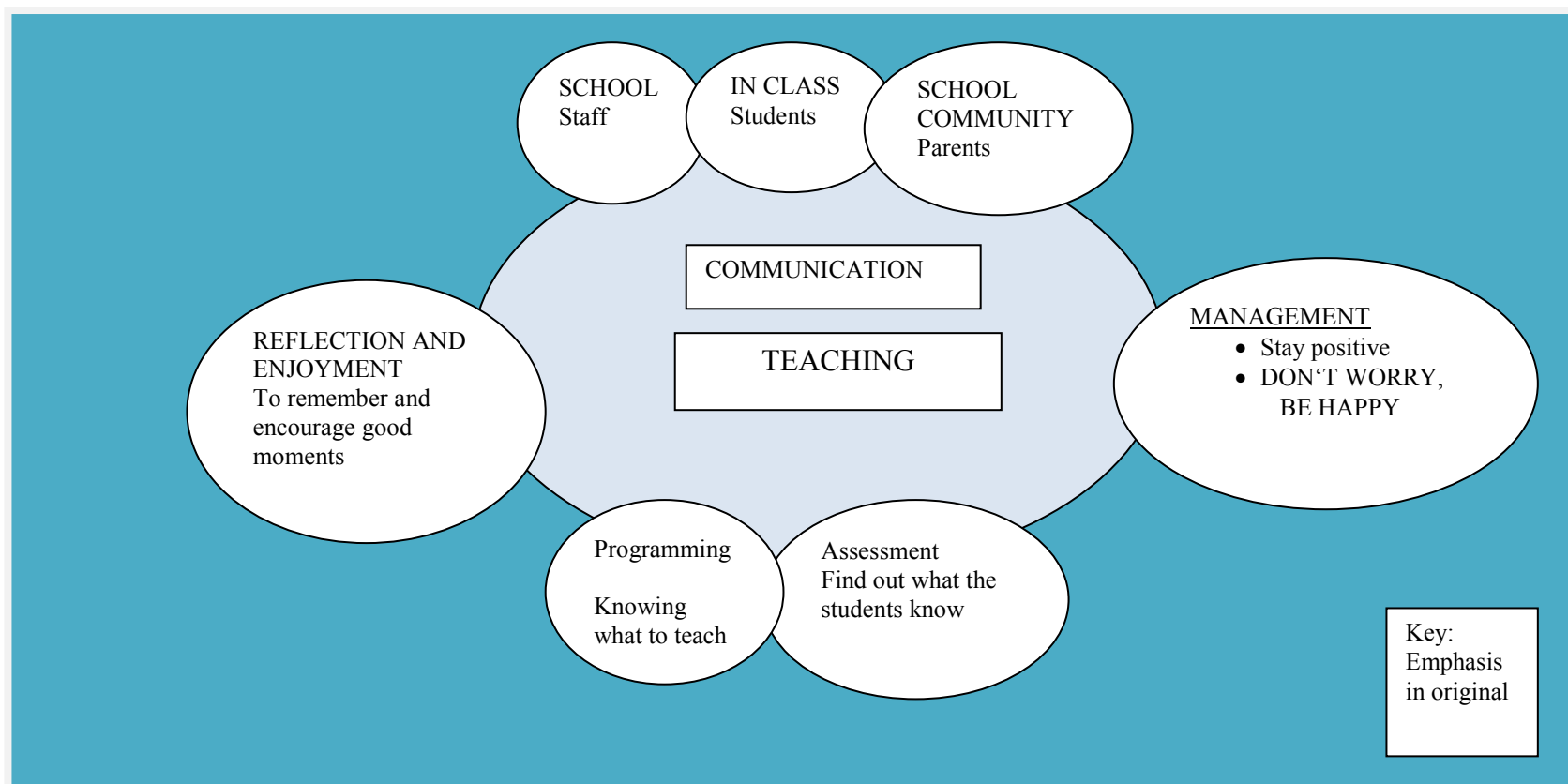




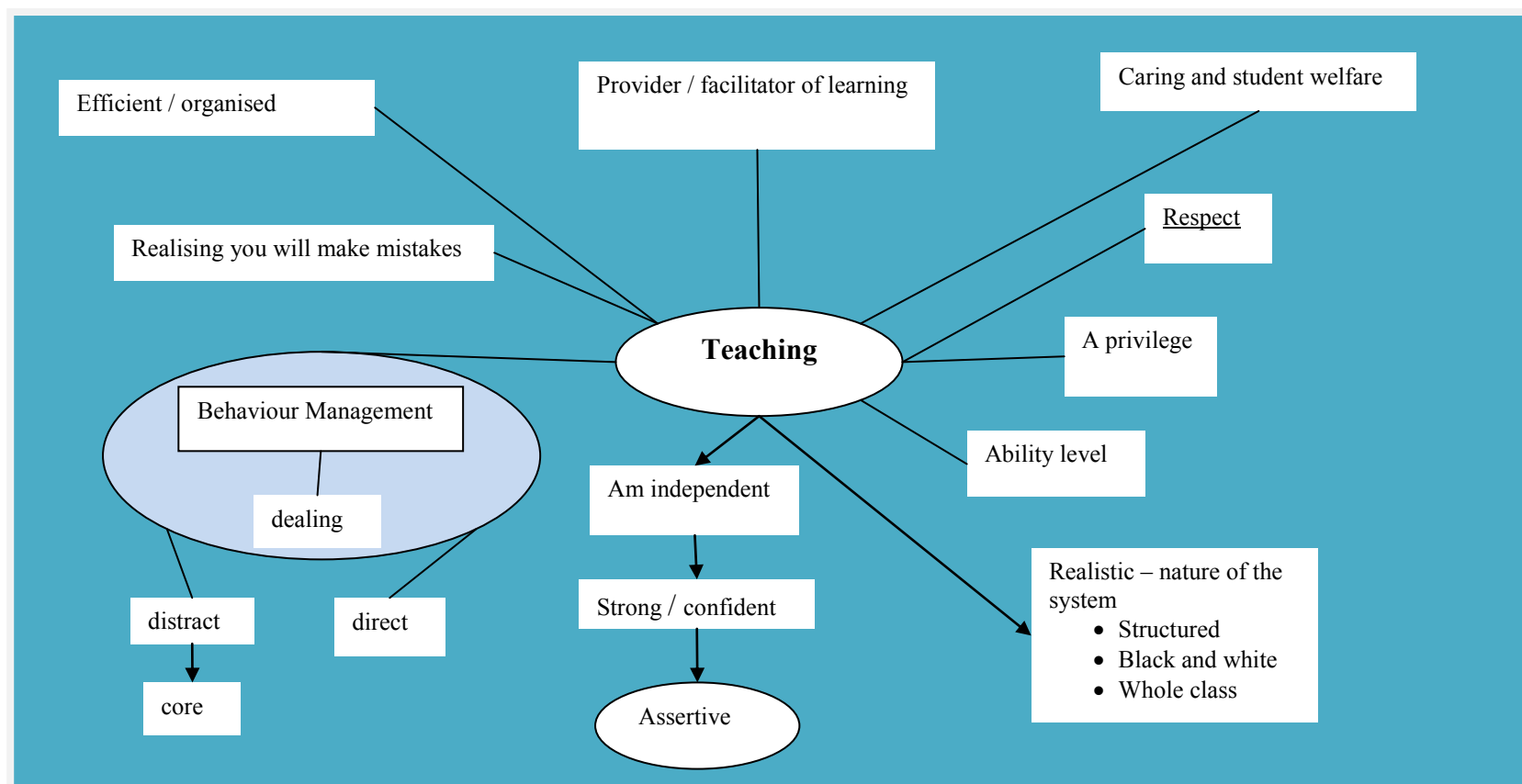
*Third Concept Map: Cate*



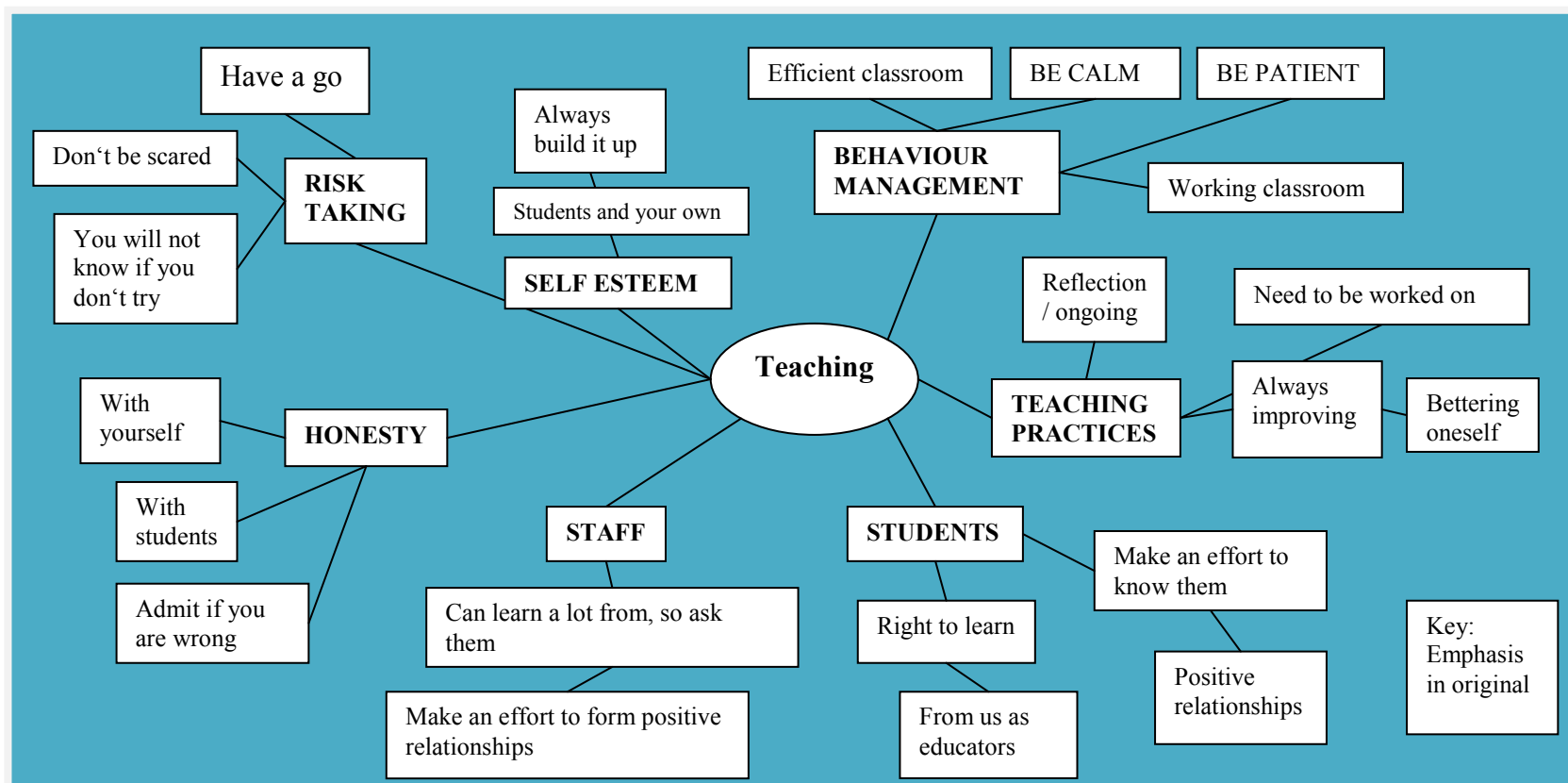
*Third Concept Map: Evan*



*Third Concept Map: Fiona*



*Third Concept Map: Graham*



*Plus-Minus Interesting Charts (PMI)*

These charts were used at the conclusion of the third interview to summarise participants' understandings and feelings about their career entry experience.

*PMI Chart: Alison*

PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual focus on students</li> <li>• Rich Task model of going <del>deep</del> "on an issue / topic</li> <li>• Focus on process not content</li> <li>• Continuous reflection on priorities</li> <li>• Relationships with children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time Management: –Fitting it all in"</li> <li>• Time (opportunity for discussion of ideas with other teachers)</li> <li>• Worry about accountability</li> <li>• Maths!!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids learn anyway (sometimes <u>despite</u> what is going on)  → you have to try really hard to completely turn them off  →Teaching vs Learning debate</li> <li>• Resilience of children and how sophisticated their understandings are about how you feel about things</li> </ul>

*PMI Chart: Bianca*

PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding myself 6-12 months whilst casual teaching</li> <li>• Having a positive day and knowing that teaching is what I want to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of teaching</li> <li>• Lack of information on professional development</li> <li>• As casual, no future planning for other roles, i.e., Community College role</li> </ul>	<p>[Bianca was unable to offer anything under this heading]</p>

*PMI Chart: Cate*

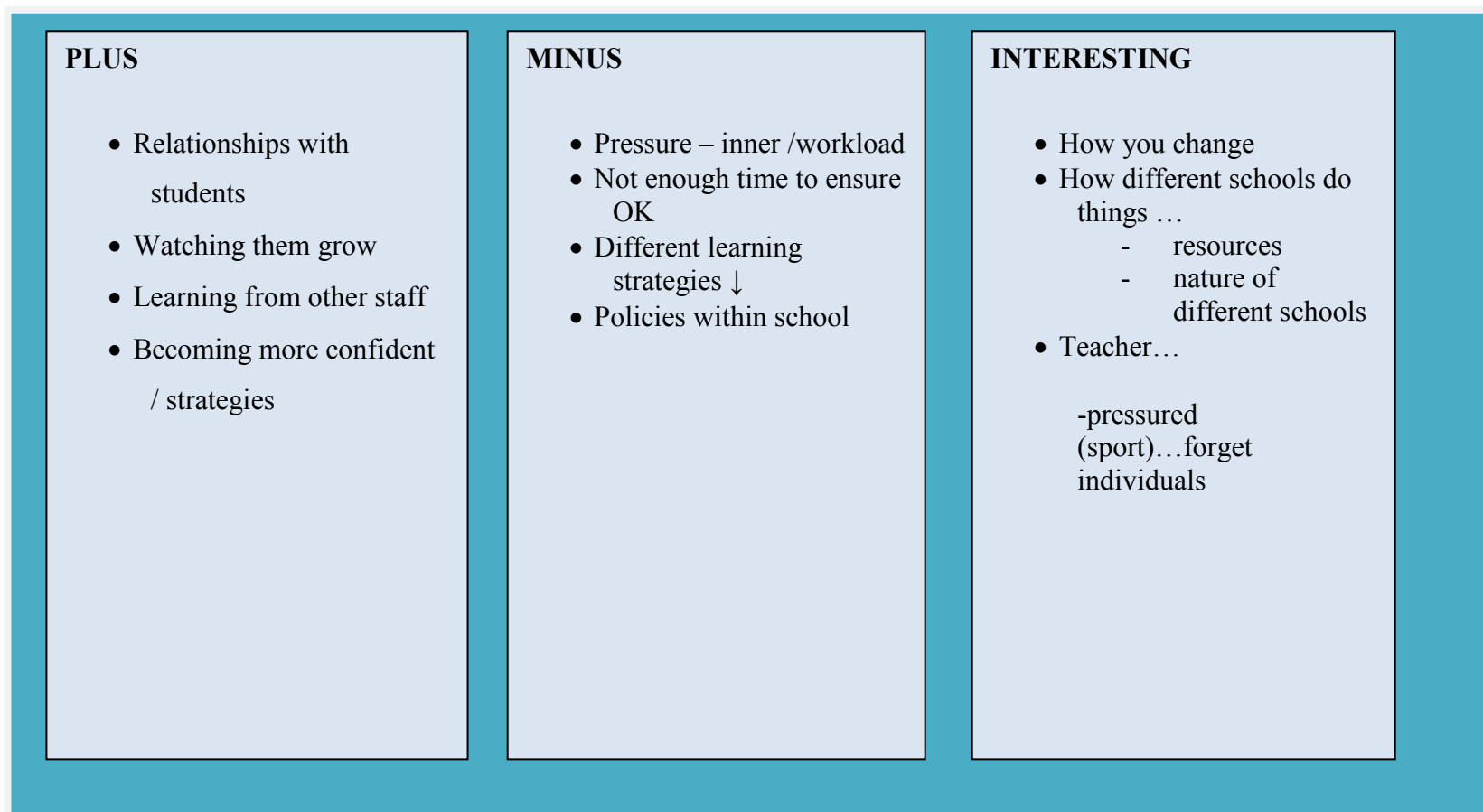
PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing into job / lifestyle</li> <li>• Satisfaction</li> <li>• Independence</li> <li>• Feeling like you're contributing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pressure</li> <li>• Less free time</li> <li>• Bills</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Less self-confidence</li> <li>• Feeling out on a limb</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New friends / lifestyle</li> </ul>



*PMI Chart: Evan*

PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationships (FRIENDSHIPS) with staff, parents, students</li> <li>• Growth in knowledge</li> <li>• Being able to bring my ideas and share with staff in a non-threatening...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative relationships with staff →restrictions on openness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way the students take on what you say or do</li> <li>• The level of my voice during class</li> <li>• How most children will always look for something to do</li> </ul>

*PMI Chart: Fiona*



*PMI Chart: Graham*

PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience at different jobs and schools eg secondary, special needs, behaviour</li> <li>• Gaining lots of experience with behavior management</li> <li>• People who I have met eg staff</li> <li>• Personally I think I have grown as a teacher eg more confident and not afraid to speak out or take something on</li> <li>• From M...Place,: Being able to meet lots of other staff from other schools and talking to them regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only teaching in small schools eg 5-10 staff</li> <li>• Little experience in primary schools</li> </ul>	<p>Every day is interesting in a behaviour job</p> <p>Range of students in abilities etc</p>

Appendix E      Transcript of Individual Interview

## Transcript of Interview

\*ALISON: Permanent teacher, L..... Primary School.

\*Date

8 March 2003

\*ALISON

So from the last time we saw you, at that stage I ...after that I found out that I'd been targeted in ACT... [Yep] so ...and then ...later on in that year I found out I'd also been targeted in NSW...[ah]... however, it was ACT that rang me and offered me a job first ...I was contacted just before the last day of Term 4 in that last week of Term 4 [oh right] just to advise that they had a position to offer me um...and then I rang my principal and spoke to him on the phone and was told then that I was going to have a Year 2 class and that sort of thing and I made a decision after that...I got in contact with NSW Department of Education and their line was you're targeted, congratulations, we don't know when we can offer you anything...if we can offer you anything at all...that sort of thing [yeah] um...so I made the decision, I thought, well... I've got to work full time, I need to work full time, so that's what I did, put the house on the market, sold the house in two days...moved back in with mum and dad...and tried to finish my honours thesis and moved to ACT [yeah] and so that's about it.

\*MARILYN

OK So you're now working...you've got a Year 2

\*ALISON

I've got a Year 2 class ...a straight 2... [OK]

\*MARILYN

Can you just describe something about the class...

\*ALISON

Yeah. I've got twenty-four ...I've got a huge range...I have three recognised gifted and talented, at the moment they're doing numeration at Year 4 level[right] they're reading at 30 plus, so they're independent readers...I've got them in a separate guided reading group. They're just about to start "The Hobbit" so .yeah...independent spelling... well, hopefully...but I'm still...I'm really still finding my feet...[yeah] really finding my feet with the class and them with me as well... um...so we've been doing a lot of...like...juggling people in and out of groups and things like [yeah, yeah] yeah...that so [yeah]..so I've got three gifted and talented and at the other end of the scale I've got two ESL (English as a Second Language)... one boy whose father's here as a visiting scientist at the CSIRO from Japan so he's got...yep...very poor English skills and another little girl whose family's here from Papua-New Guinea um but I think I'll be losing both of those children about June or July...they'll be returning back to [yeah, going home] their um countries...their parents' work'll be finished. Um...I also have ah...one girl with a hearing problem and she has ...yeah... she's in like, Reading Recovery... guided reading... and her sister whose a little bit better but not much, and then I've got this group in the middle that sort of go from yeah...that sort of cover in the rest of that middle range. But I'm very lucky, they have an ESL teacher and a Reading Recovery Learning Assistance teacher and they work a lot with the junior school [mm] so I actually have four days a week, they come and take my lowest students [yeah] and take them for independent reading and guided reading sessions and things like that. So that's a relief ...but still within my classroom that leaves me my gifted and talented group who are on their own [yes, yes and another probably two groups that cover say ten to twelve levels in the PM reading bookmarks [Oh yes, yes] so ...[right, OK] so that's a big range...

\*MARILYN

...different from what you had in your internship?

\*ALISON

Um... Very much so... yeah. {Yeah, yes}...there's such a range and there's a huge range...[right] So even though I've got a straight...I've got more individual differences in this straight two class than I had in a combined 5-6. [Yeah... right] last year for my internship so I'm really looking at it...which is making it very, very difficult because it's very, very difficult to find activities to suit all the students so I'm really looking at um... guided reading and doing guided reading groups and also guided maths [right] but that in itself as you know is just a...it's a logistical nightmare [oh, yes, yeah] trying to do that and while I have assistance with the um reading at this stage I don't so much with the maths – however they are running a special gifted and talented program and the lady at the school who's running that is also the librarian um and she's doing it as part of her master's study [right] so she'll actually be taking my gifted and talented for maths [oh, ok] so I'll have that assistance and support there which is great. [Yeah] which is a difference because apart from like in my internship school last year, apart from the one ESL girl who had a half hour every day with a dedicated teacher... there was no in-class assistance at all. Like I had no teacher's aides or anything come in so ....

\*MARILYN

With the groups that assist you, do you do the programming...or are they programming?

\*ALISON

They program

\*MARILYN

They program...yeah, yeah. So it's not ...you're not actually having to program and then manage other people?

\*ALISON

No...not at all...but that causes again problems um because our school \_s actually moving to integrated rich tasks [oh yeah] you know, coming out of Queensland [yeah, yeah] which makes it difficult because we have an understanding that you know, seventy percent of what we should teacher should be taught within those um rich tasks projects so that makes it quite difficult when I'm losing that amount of class so yeah, so I've got to try to stay within my project but teach at certain times.

\*MARILYN

So you're marrying outcomes, rich tasks and other people moving in and out...

\*ALISON

Yes. [Not easy, yeah] Yeah.. So I'm not expecting to get through much this term...however I'm hoping Term 2 and Term 3 and Term 4 [yeah] will be the ...when I really get more done and I think that's one of my greatest worries sort of saying look, they're not learning anything, what am I doing (laughter) ...any moment now someone's going to come and knock on my door and say –You're not a real teacher What are you doing? You know, the gig'll be up."(Laughter) I'll get there...and the school has been very, very supportive and I think that's worried me a little bit and it...it is a change from my internship experience.

\*MARILYN

You mean...what's worried you?

\*ALISON

Well...I was just thinking oh...you know like doing the program and if I don't get this done and you know...people are going to be[yeah] looking, and I think a lot of that came from my internship

experience which was quite negative [oh ok...which was negative] ...it was negative in some ways but on the other way, you know, like, I learned a lot... I walked away with a lot about ...you know ...things you should make sure happen and those sorts of things...but the school here has been absolutely fantastic and that had a big bearing on my decision to knock back a targeted position from NSW.

\*MARILYN

Oh, ok. Where was your targeted position?

\*ALISON

They rang me Wednesday and offered me G... South.

\*MARILYN

Oh yeah, OK

\*ALISON

Yeah...so I rang and spoke to the principal there and um took a couple of days to think about it and then I just thought no, I'm really happy with the system here , just with the way these people think about their children and about education itself and how they support their teachers and each other and I just thought I know after having gone through my internship I know that I'm in a really good place...a really good place for me...so I just thought ...no

\*MARILYN

Yeah, OK, right...that's very late isn't it to be offering a position in that way

\*ALISON

It was and they were quite ...the difference with it being... and I know that I was a bit...I think I felt this last year ...well, I got...I have always felt that ACT really wanted me to come

\*MARILYN

Yes, you said that last time..

\*ALISON

I really felt that yeah and I'd always felt like NSW thought they were doing me a favour ...(laughter) and I know that's terrible [No, it's not] and I was talking to the lady on the phone and she said oh, do you mind if I... if you give me a reason because we need it for our stats and I said well the reason is I said, I needed to know beforehand and I said ACT offered me the job and I said and I'm very, very happy within this system and the things that they've done and she said oh well we don't have the capacity to do that and I said well, that's where ACT's very lucky then because they're able to make people feel like you're really needed... yeah.

\*MARILYN

Interesting that she said we don't have the capacity...

\*ALISON

Yeah, yeah... and I mean for all intents and purposes like when I rang like when I got the targeted letter from NSW and they told me then that um we could offer you a position any time this year...it probably won't be until Term 3-Term 4 you know I mean if they had given me an indication then that we could offer you a position in Term 1 that would have been a different thing for me to think about [Yeah, yeah]...well I thought you know I can hang out here and do a bit of casual teaching for you know, the rest of the time and ...and wait for that position to come up but when they were talking, you know, six or nine months I just thought...I can't ..I don't want to spend six or nine months away from what I've learned at uni, and all those sorts of things and doing casual teaching [Yeah] so....[OK]

\*MARILYN

What...if you were to actually identify what are the key changes or key things that you've actually had to focus on that are different...so there's the class that has additional staff, the class that has more variations in it perhaps...that sense of having to manage different groupings [yeah]...what else?

\*ALISON

The biggest thing that I've had to deal with is getting to know the school and the school processes. [OK] I think... I'm only just now being able to finalise a timetable, they have a lot of programs within the school, so I've got the reading specialists taking my children out which means I've had to... I cannot do guided reading in the mornings... I have to do it now in second session. I have a buddy class with a 3-4 class and we have had to change our day like three times (laughter) we're spending an afternoon doing leisure education...we're looking at doing fun activities you can do with friends or on your own that don't require a lot of money [oh, ok] so we're targeting on that and physical activity as well...we're working on Jump Rope for Heart at the moment [oh, yes] um...I've got to fit in assemblies, I have to fit in my library and release times ...they've just been finalised ...that really has been the bit...but you just don't see when you're out on a prac...because by the time you're prac'ing that's all been organised...you come in, there's your timetable and you can sort of pick up and go straight away but I've had to move when I do my maths, when I do all of those sorts of things, not knowing where I've got to go or what my release is going to be ...at this stage I have three lots of release ... one for Greek... we have a teacher here who does...they're doing LOTE ...then I have another one for library time and another one when there's just a release teacher that comes into my class and just even getting those things formalised [yeah] you know like you have that surprise release when people walk in and say, I'm here to give you release and you've got to get out of the classroom but you actually have nothing ready to pick up and go [yeah] and do, while you're actually looking at it, so I think that's been the biggest thing it's those things that uni just doesn't teach you. [Yes] and then trying to fit in everything that you know you should be doing and getting into that timetable.

\*MARILYN

So the timetable's crowded?

\*ALISON

Yeah, really crowded, really crowded...like how do you get through all your curriculum areas and those sorts of things but that was something that was the same when I was doing prac and things like that. It was just like God, how am I going to do it...and as well, fitting in those really fun things you know like on Friday we had ...we watched a video because the kids had just worked so hard and you need to do that with them as well [yeah, yeah]. I think at the end of week 3 I went and bought a big packet of Zooper Doopers from the canteen and then took them all outside and we had a Zooper Dooper ...because they need to be rewarded as well for working really well together [yeah, yeah] and those other things...you know, those afternoons where they say —“we're just too tired” you know, and you've got to cater for that too...if they've had a really good morning, and yeah, and they just have an afternoon where they just say —“I'm too tired to think...my brain hurts” (laughter) ..OK, we'll stop and we'll do something [yeah] and those things that you feel you really want to do, like read to them as a class and you know, all those things that just get lost along the way...some days are just full...absolutely full... yeah...

\*MARILYN

Is there anything you thought you would do, that you're not doing..., or thought you wouldn't do that you are doing? When you were sort of thinking about what you'd be like as a teacher or what it would be like to be a teacher, is there anything that's come as a sort of...apart from that having to fit in... as a surprise, or a shock or... about how you're re acting as a teacher?

\*ALISON

Using my voice...[oh, ok] yes...that need to ...I'm actually looking at different things to do like, I'm looking at see if I can go and buy a little cymbal or something which I can ring to get attention and things like that...see with my class as well I actually have eighteen boys [oh yes] and six girls ...yeah... [oh, right] so it's really a full on....quite a full on classroom. And I'm...myself I'm trying to be much better about louder noise ...[ah ok] I'm really trying to so that...like we've instituted certain times of the day and certain activities that are silent or whispering activities [yep] it's a whispering



afternoon...can't talk in more than a whisper but I'm trying to give them a lot of those opportunities because you know my thesis was on boys and girls and that single gender program [yes] um so while I'm trying...I'm trying to not disadvantage the boys for acting how society tells them boys should , you know, and that's one of the biggest findings that came out of my thesis was that while those two classes ....one of the concerns the school had was that they were actually reinforcing gender stereotypes. The thing was that the really interesting thing for me was the way that those gender stereotypes were differently valued or devalued within the school. You know, when girls conform to the girls' stereotype the quiet schoolgirl, neat work, that sort of thing they get rewarded; when boys conform to the same stereotypes – noisy, hands-on, um... work... oral work...things like that ...they are a discipline problem. And that's... so I'm trying in myself to change my idea of what an effective classroom is ...you know...just to sort of give them those opportunities to share books ...and ...like they love to get books out and, you know, show each other, and ooh look at this really good picture and things like that so silent reading is just been a nightmare because they ...some of them just can't do it...so we have to give them those opportunities ...there's silent reading, now you can go and share your book with a friend... you know, those sorts of things. So I think that's the biggest thing... is I...you know like, we...you talk in uni about you know, classrooms and you know, there should be lots of group work and there should be a lot of this and you should expect noise and everything. I found in myself that I was really concerned that it should be quieter so even though I myself you know like... can talk about oh yes, no, this is all really good activities and things like that... I'm also worried about other teachers...like I used to...I walk past other teachers' classrooms and they're silent.. and I'm going oh no, they're going to think that I'm not a good teacher and I'm not a good disciplinarian...because I cannot stop my kids...there's just that undertone the whole time ...[yeah] and I said, ooh, you know, is that a bad thing or ...is that something that's going to come with experience or yeah...

\*MARILYN

What...having done that thesis when you looked at boys and girls and you've now got the boy-girl very clearly, how far...how right were you? (Laughter) If I can put it that way...In terms of what your findings were, did doing that thesis help you accommodate to what you've got now?

\*ALISON

I think so [made you aware? Or...?] Made me more aware about what I value and devalue [yeah] you know, \_cause I can see in myself that thing...ooh...you know, that thing about ...if they're quiet they're working...and that's not always so...I mean they could be absolutely completely off task but as long as they're quiet that's not worrying you so yes...that really made me think about you know, I've got to have times when this is a noisy activity and you can talk to your friends and do those sorts of things and on the other hand, too, two of the most raucous people in my class are the girls ...are girls...you know..., they're loud, they're rambunctious, [yeah] and I want them to stay that way, I don't want to start pushing those you know, good girls are quiet girls... that sort of thing. So, that really has made me think and made me think rather than try and change them, I need to change... There was something.. I started off with table groups and it was just mayhem, absolute mayhem, the noise was just terrible and we sat down as a group, as a class, and I said, You know Miss Brown is losing her voice. What's happening? They just said, we just talk too much... all the time (Laughter). I said, what do you think about that? I said, do you think you can stop talking, or do you think perhaps we need to change our desks around? And they looked at me and they go Oh we think you'd better change the desks (laughter). You know, so that. so we went into a U shape [oh right, yes] So I've got a U-shape with a small group of tables in the middle and in that group in the middle I've actually got my three gifted and talented so at least they're close to each other so that they can have that interaction within themselves. Little things like that... I mean, I roused on them the other day...we talk a lot about don't make Miss Brown get her rousy voice out (laughter) and we talked the other day and I said, well, what happened this afternoon and they said, oh, we made too much noise...we wouldn't stop talking , we were naughty. And I said well, what do you think I should do? Is Miss Brown not hard enough... they went...no-o-o . I said, what do you think I should do? NO more free time for the rest of the year... I said, Ooh, you don't think that's a bit harsh (laughter) and they went, Mm, and I said well how about we try something, you know, a little bit different and ...two of my boys that I have a lot of trouble with um....and that's just constant talking, but they're not doing it to be naughty...it's just the way they are ... [that's what they are...Mm] I actually ..I've got a class points system and we ...we've got a grid on the wall with a hundred points on it and if they're good they go

and mark up...OK you go and mark off two class points and the deal is at 25 points they get a free afternoon, at fifty points ...class party; seventy-five points fun day at the school so they can have a whole day fun; a hundred points, excursion. So with the boys I said, you two boys if you can be quiet for this whole session I'm going to give you a class point for each of you... and so what does everyone else has to do... and the others said, if they talked to us, we have to go Shh! And we can't make them...we can't talk to them and get them into trouble so...yeah.

\*MARILYN

So you've got strategies for dealing with ...or trying...

\*ALISON

Starting to .yeah. Trying out a lot of different strategies all the time depending on the kids who are involved and also just...well, as you know, some days things work and other days, they don't ...so doing a lot of those sorts of things.

\*MARILYN

What I was going to ask you if you could do for me...at this point can I ask you if you could do me a concept map about teaching...just where you're at now and talk it...just talk it...

\*ALISON

So if I talk about teaching...I've got to say there's...how I am at the moment?

\*MARILYN

.How you are at the moment.

\*ALISON

OK. There's planning and programming I'll take that out, I'll use the American spelling without the double m and the e ..OK so I've got planning and programming and I see that as absolutely separate to what I do day-to-day. [OK] I find that...I just...I have to know what I'm doing and have everything done because I just don't get time to think during the day.

\*MARILYN

So when you say they're separate...

\*ALISON

Yeah, Like, I do this like planning and programming is something I do out of school hours [right, but it links to this ] yes, oh absolutely, yeah...

\*MARILYN

I was... surely you don't program and then do something different...it was just my interpretation....(laughter)

\*ALISON

No...no, no, no.... [right, yep I understand]... so I've sort of got that over there so these are sort of like the two parts of my life ... [right] and there's the day-to-day. Planning and programming...um...parents, students, and school. And me...[OK]

Day-to-day...is basically just...I won't call it survival because it's not even that...

\*MARILYN

... it got that far, or is that too limited a word (tape difficult to hear)

\*ALISON

I think it's too... maybe too limited a word...that's just um I might call it "inside teaching" and ~~outside teaching~~ [OK] and that's sort of all my um... that's your activities ... um... the learning and teaching... I suppose I'm trying to say lessons there [OK, yeah] and then I've sort of got this ~~outside teaching~~ ... and these are the things almost I think you don't get credit for... and this is... not even so much behaviour management but self-esteem, mm...yeah...it's the ...it's almost...

\*MARILYN

Is it what underlies this?

\*ALISON

Yeah, it's almost implicit or explicit ...like I might spend half an hour of my day ...we might sit and talk about something that's happened in the playground or those sorts of things but it's not within my programs [yep] but they're important things that you need to deal with and it's about valuing students [yes] making them feel a part of this classroom ...having those discussions about ~~this is a problem~~, what do we need to do about it, what can we do as a class". If somebody's having a bad day, you know what do we do...those sort of strategies which really aren't within that ...do you know what I mean?

\*MARILYN

Yes, I do ...they're not...you don't program them under a KLA particularly because they...

\*ALISON

No, and you don't program them because you deal with them as they come up or you [they're emerging] and I think this sort of stuff is the stuff that's tied to personal philosophy [Yes, OK, yes]/. This is the stuff that I think's really important

\*MARILYN

I think you're right

\*ALISON

This is the stuff that underlies ... I want every child...so if there's a behaviour that's happening there we need to stop that now [yeah]. What we've...the amount of times we've had that discussion ~~oh~~ somebody teased somebody because..." you know, they had a mole on their head or because they were tall, and every time that happens, it's ~~pens~~ down, come and sit on the floor, let's talk about that." [Yep, yeah]. You know what I mean, and you can't really say that you're programming for it because you don't, because you don't know when those situations are going to arise.

\*MARILYN

Is ...did you ever ...is that sort of the ~~teachable~~ moment" stuff?

\*ALISON

Yeah, almost... the teachable moment...but it's a development moment ... it's a personal development moment [yes, it is] ...it's about individuals not about the class... [yes, yes, yes] and it's about working together as individuals [yes, yes that's interesting] and not as ...you know... the teacher and the class [fascinating] ..so there's those sorts of things, you know, like...reward...choice...those afternoons where they just don't feel like something...what do you think you'd like to do...oh, can we do this or can we do that...[yeah] so you go on and do that. With the planning and programming, I'm really setting it up into different areas...like, so far this term, I've had to provide a term 1 overview...we had a parent information night so that's when parents were invited to come in and I had to prepare, like, a three page overview about me and what we were doing and those sorts of things...I should have brought a copy over for you...[oh yeah, ok] next time when you... when you want to do those things, because my Term 1, Term 2 Term 3 and Term 4 overviews will show some sort of difference... [that'd be great.] in my level of knowledge and my idea of where I want to go and that sort of thing

...um...homework...and that's really ..interested me... like, I treat homework...I'm giving out homework at the moment because parents want me to and that was something that I negotiated with them at that parent information night [OK] um...my problem with homework is that not every child does it which means that I find it very difficult or unfair to try to...link it too much to what we're doing in the classroom ...like it can't be dependent ...today's lesson can't be dependent on whether or not you did last night's homework [yes, that's right] that sort of thing so sometimes I sort of fell like you know... and homework takes so much of your time to mark it... to do it...and you sort of think you know, well, I'm trying to make it ..to get it away from that from me feeling that it's for parents only...um and to get it so that it's actually helping their... so what I've done is I've tried to help myself as much as possible ..I've gone to the Jacaranda teaching suppliers and got a few books and then I just go through and just say, well, that's sort of what we're doing...we're looking at a little bit like this and linking it where I can to the school program but not making it dependent upon having done it because some kids just wither...especially with the range of children in my class their parents might not have the English skills to assist them, they ...all of those sorts of things so I'm sort of programming for parents, and then I'm programming for students ...at moment that's a lot of looking at their maths books and trying to work out...you know like, special things like I have one child who can't write his numerals the right way round so I need to develop like a program for him which gives him time to do those...to prise those things but he's not a homework kid [ah, yeah] he's not a boy that's handed in his homework yet...so that means I've got to try and find somewhere within class to give him, you know, those opportunities to prise those sorts of things, so that's sort of the individual ...so that's um ...across KLAs um...some of my gifted and talented kids can't catch a tennis ball...[oh, yes] and some of my other kids are doing it...so I'm sort of looking at it...and saying oh no, don't tell me I'm going to have to have groups for PD, H PE as well...I thought Oh my God, I can't cope ...not more groups (laughter) but it's picking up those little things [ok, yeah] and I'm only just starting to see that now ..I'm starting to see patterns ...in work and things like that [yeah...ok] so you know, you've got your G & T and you've got your remedial stuff and the kids sort of go between those groups in all different things so I \_m really sort of like focusing on the students as well [yep, yep] and trying not to end up with twenty-seven individual learning programs ...but it's getting to be there's certain things that I'm picking out for each child and it might be a maths thing or it might be oh I want to see that child inter with a different group...or this child needs ..I need to encourage this child to be more verbal...say those sorts of things so I'm getting to have these little...almost like individual...there's group goals but there's almost like little individual things... I'd really like to do this for this child...and concentrate on this particular thing. Then I've got the school, which is at ...

\*MARILYN

Can I just check in there when you were programming for this, are you finding that programming to the syllabus is any...much different...are you having to pick up much new there...or? No...

\*ALISON

No, it's basically just working out the new... 'cause they work off the national profiles [Yes, that's what I thought they did] yeah, so it's really...and the National Profiles books are much easier ...to work with than the NSW ones [Right, ok, yeah]. So I'm just sort of finding that now but I tend to program to NSW first and then find the [yeah, ok] like I know...I think, oh I know there's something in the NSW syllabus so if there's something there it's got to have a matching thing (laughter) in the National Profiles [Yeah]. Yeah, so that's been a little bit difficult... 'cause you don't have that constant... like it almost got to a stage where you knew your syllabus so well by the end of four years that you knew oh, if I pick that bit up here [that's what I wondered, yeah, you sort of...] yeah, so that's taking a bit of time as well [yeah, yes] actually working with new syllabus documents [yeah]. So there's sort of all those sort of things, so what you do as a group, um, so in their ability groups, the individual stuff, but it's social things as well...

\*MARILYN

You're seeing more groups than you expected...more grouping as a strategy than you expected from the schools you've seen?

\*ALISON

Yes. Yeah, but that is particular to my group this year. [Oh, OK] I might not have to do that [Yep]

next year depending on the class I get [because of the range] because of that range ...that's what's actually caused that to happen [Oh, OK, yes]

\*MARILYN

So that's not directly school policy that every lesson is...

\*ALISON

No, certainly not...that is directly linked to just the profile of my class [Yes. Yeah. Right]. And I can't see any other way because I've got to let those g & T guys go on with their maths because they're bored silly sitting there working on numeration and number [I can imagine, yes, yeah] you know, like these guys can you know, work with six digit numbers and things like that so I need to get them away and ...

\*MARILYN

And your school will be able to carry that through?

\*ALISON

Well, I'm not sure actually how they're doing, because they're only just really inaugurating the g & t program [oh, ok] but I had a talk to the lady that was doing it and I've got to do what I need to do [oh yes] and if that means that next year, you know, that's ...and I know it's going to be somebody else's problem but hopefully by that stage they'll have some sort of better program worked out for those boys because you just...it's not fair on them ..[oh no, no] yeah, it's not fair on them at all. And then I've got the school program which is sort of what I'm working on now which is the actual presentation of a document ..[oh, ok] with outcomes, and that's ...that's me as well, but that ...that formal documentation process of getting it all [yes, accountability] so that somebody else can read it and see what I'm doing. Yeah, so ...yeah...so that's accountability to outside people ...[yep] So it's actually putting those things that I've picked up but actually making them concrete ...you know, saying you know, this is the way I want to do it...so that's your outcomes, your accountability, um...and then there's me...which again, ties my personal philosophy —where do I want to take these kids?" What am I going to...this is me setting my own priorities, um...outcomes, accountability, so that's you KLAs ...so that's making sure everything's covered...that's the rich task planning ....which is a huge thing...I mean, and that's a big thing for the school [Mm] um...like... we've had planning days and that sort of thing and the principal who is fantastic...oh I'm so happy that I'm where I am...he's just fantastic...and the whole staff have been great. So that's been a whole shift in focus so I mean that's been a big problem and that's finding resources ...and [exactly] all that sort of stuff because they're not...they're only just starting with it so rich task planning, um...and sort of over here somewhere you've got that whole timetable and school organisation ...and it's fitting in all those things that you do together...that's fitting in your assemblies and your special days and all of those things...like they have a dance program ...like they have a guy that comes in and does dance for the whole school [oh, really?] but my class don't get it till second semester but he comes on Friday and spends an hour with each group, you know, so they get...and he's a dance specialist, which is just ...[oh, superb] I know it's just wonderful...isn't it [yes, well for your boys...] yes, yeah, it's going to be great.. oh, I mean, my boys love to dance.. I've got a techno times table and it's a...yeah it's a ...rap times table and they just get up and they have a big deck(?) \_cause they're still at that age where they get up and have a dance ...and ...they're fantastic actually...they love to sing and dance and all that sort of thing so...[great]. And I suppose I'm starting to identify within myself areas that I really think I need help with. And that's things like...I'm really concerned about the literacy program and that could just be a confidence thing as well.

\*MARILYN

So when you say you're concerned about it...what you've got isn't...you don't feel is good enough? Or is getting you far enough? Or..

\*ALISON

I'm not sure I'm doing the right thing [OK] I think is the biggest thing (right, OK, yeah) so I'm sort of

looking at areas you know, well if I had to do some PD, what sort of things ..like I've already been to a guided reading pd day which was fantastic ...I got a few really, really good ideas there and this is it...I mean they just throw...I've already been to a philosophy in the classroom pd, and that sort of stuff so ...and I've got my induction as well...so I've got another day next week where they get in all new teachers and they tell us about the department and start explaining those sort of rules and everything for us as well. So like, I'm looking at areas of pd for myself um...resources ...and that's almost tied to this sort of organisational thing as well like I spend OK I'm doing something on maths...so I've got to spend say an hour making up number cards out of SENA because I don't have that... I've ...I estimate I've spent \$1000 already buying classroom resources...that's books from Jacaranda, that's dominoes and sentence cards and those sort of things which I know are going to make my life easier to work in these language rotations...to be able to set up really, really good activities that ...for my guided reading groups so...those sorts of things...whereas while you amass resources while you're at uni, you don't really have the money [No, no] and I think if that's one thing that I regret in that four years and this is something just in my life personally I concentrated on being a good student and couldn't see past the four years and think, you know, it'd be a really good idea if I spent five minutes now and did this and went and got them laminated ...and then I would have that forever. [Yeah] Yeah, I probably didn't do that...I probably concentrated more on the academic side of it without thinking that I'm about to go out teaching ....[yeah] but on the other hand I mean like, you don't...that means resources for K to 6 and ...yeah...so that was probably..

\*MARILYN

They're probably more targeted doing them now...

\*ALISON

Yeah [yeah, ok] so...and that's part of like doing those sorts of things, like I want to go out and you know, teach soccer skills... like, we had no tennis balls ...I'm running round in my release time going into classrooms saying "Has anybody got a tennis ball I can borrow" and those sorts of things...I mean that all takes time. [Yeah] Yeah...you know, working out where everything is ...and [Yeah, yeah] ...so I'd say ...and those sort of things I'm not doing, like ...I'm doing that...that's in addition to me working every day yeah...that's just...

\*MARILYN

What's that doing to you?

\*ALISON

Oh, I'm buggered. (Laughter) I'm tired [Yes.] but the other thing too is, I only handed my thesis in two weeks ago, [oh, ok] so for the first three weeks, I went school, program, home, thesis. Every weekend I was going home doing...showing my thesis to my supervisor...working...so I had that for the first three or four weeks as well...that was a huge thing...um...so really it's only been these last two weeks where I feel that I've been able to give 100 per cent ...to this. But yeah, like, I've got the Deputy Principal's keys, I borrow them off her every day and I come in and I start.. I try and get to school by seven o'clock because I just find that that gives me enough time to get organised and I know this won't last forever. [Yeah, yeah]. You know, I know that this...once I get into the hang of it, I don't even think it'll last you know, past term 2. I think at that stage I'll know then, enough about my kids and enough about...and I will have those timetables and routines set up in the classroom. I don't think uni ever prepares you for ...how almost the whole of Term 1 you're actually teaching children how to do activities , not just the content of the activity. You know, how do guided reading groups work, you know like, for last week, because the groups only started last week, \_cause that's when my testing was done and they decided that these were the targeted kids they were going to withdraw from the classroom so for the whole of last week, it was just getting kids used to sitting in groups of four and reading to each other [Yes] so there was really wasn't even any activities tied to it, it was just that teaching ...this is the routine, and this is a quiet time, and this is the sort of voice that we use, and this is the...and if Miss Brown is working with one group here, then you have to wait, you know, you can't [yes, yes]...that sort of thing. The same with the maths group... you know, OK, we'll talk about that whole...the big concept here...now this group goes away and works... and this group

comes down ...this group's allowed to get out the MAB blocks and they can actually still work with concrete materials ...that sort of setting up routines is just...it takes so much time and you just have days when you just think we did nothing today...you know, I have nothing to show ...if somebody was to ...that whole thing about accountability ...if somebody wanted to ...if was to come in and say what did you do today, there is nothing concrete that I could have shown them but there were those other things that we learned a bit more about how to work with groups, we learned a bit more about how to say nice things to each other [yeah] we learned, you know, how to take turns, we learned those sorts of things...which are just as important as meeting an outcome ...learning how to work together and learning how to...you know...if you're feeling sad or having a bad day...well what do you need to do, you come and see Miss Brown and we'll set you up you know, we can do something else.... but you know, we don't hit, we don't push, we don't ....you know....stand up, no, put your chairs in, those sort of things which I was just really...

\*MARILYN

So do ...are you finding ...are you more resigned to that now ...or are you still trying to push past that and feel as though you should be doing something else?

\*ALISON

I think I'm feeling a lot of guilt at the moment [Yeah, ok] that I don't feel as though I'm doing enough...but on the other hand, I shouldn't feel that because I'm getting really, really good feedback from parents, from the principal [good] you know, saying, don't panic, you know, I know you're trying to do too much, you're first year out, that often happens [yes, yeah] but step back: parents are happy, the children are going home happy, they want to come to school, they ...you know, so that's as important... if you get that environment right, everything else will flow from that.

\*MARILYN

So you ...in a sense what...what they're suggesting is that you learn to respond to outside feedback rather than what...what you think? ..

\*ALISON

What I think I should be doing...yeah...what I think should be happening.[Yeah, yes, OK].

\*MARILYN

Do you have any time for reflection?

\*ALISON

Um...not formally and I'm changing that this weekend ...I'm actually setting up my daybook the way I used to have it when I was actually on internships and that's where I actually have a whole half a page and I get used to reflecting after each session..[oh, ok] just a quick 2 minute "What happened" ..Not "Oh my God, you know, that was terrible" or whatever... and then at the end of the day, those little snippets of information about either certain kids or certain incidents that happened or things that didn't go well, or...but next time we need to do it this way...so I'm setting that up because I mess that.[yeah] and while I might be doing it internally, I think I'll benefit from having it written down and making it a more formal process.

\*MARILYN

So you would still see that as a key part of how you...how you're moving on.

\*ALISON

Absolutely. Yep. [Yep]. Absolutely. And that's probably the thing that I'm worried about most that I'm not doing. You know, I don't want to get stuck into that habit... Mm.. of OK that was Monday, now I'll get Tuesday's work ready, now I get Wednesday's ...I want to go back and say oh what did I learn today about my kids. You know, what did I learn about, you know, me...you know, what do I need to do..is there a way that I need to that I could have need better or those sorts of things ...but yeah...interesting.

\*MARILYN

So you are learning...

\*ALISON

I am learning..(laughter) I'm learning a lot [yeah, yeah, interesting]. And balancing... I think... a lot of these things..and just trying to work out, you know, well, ok so your priority is to teach your eight KLAs but there are bigger priorities than that ...and that is, you know, getting that environment right. Yeah..and just wanting to ...building that relationship with the kids [yeah] It's ..and that's sort of happening more and more.

\*MARILYN

I had a series of questions but in a way I think you've answered them.. but I'm just going to run through [yep] I was looking for ..and you said it right at the beginning ...that you re becoming more understanding of the way the school works as a system.. and that's coming from...I guess basically .. fitting in, is it... and then from say, your induction.. or not...?

\*ALISON

I would not say induction, at all[OK, oh that's interesting] ...I would say the school as...the school as an entity [right, OK], their philosophy about um shared activities, the things that run through the whole school, so I think more those sorts of things.

\*MARILYN

So it's just being part of an entity and working out how the parts fit...

\*ALISON

Yeah, and not isolating yourself in the classroom [right, ok] but making those opportunities you know like I'm ..I've got buddy classes on Thursday afternoons. Myself and the Year One teacher...she's also ..she's an experienced teacher but she's new to the school ..we're going to do a joint music thing [right, ok] cause we had a look and said ..I just said, I don't feel I'm doing that well enough in the class so if I feel that I'm missing out on it then I need to set a time for it. So she goes well let's go to the music room and we'll just sing, movement, percussion which will be good for..a good precursor for my children before they go into dance next semester [yeah, mm] So you know, like, working out those sorts of things.

\*MARILYN

Yeah, so you're not being told how the school works, it's by fitting in with it .

\*ALISON

Absolutely.

\*MARILYN

Oh ok, yeah. It's just a different process but yeah...

\*ALISON

It is, yeah. And while they try and tell you things to start with, and then like, there's just so much on those first couple of days and things that are taken for granted [uh huh] that aren't told, that you find out [yes, yes] you know, afterwards. So while they they've been really supportive and they try to do everything, I think if there was one thing that I would ...that I would suggest ...it's that they have an induction package for new teachers. [Oh, ok] similar to what you'd give a prac teacher. You know, here it is...here is our...like, I got a curriculum box with all the school statements of their curriculum documents and those sorts of things, like their own little plans and development...this is what we think at this school...those sort of things [yeah] but um...I would probably ..to actually have a ...almost like a casual teacher's handbook [yeah] you see some schools have [OK, yeah]... yeah, I



don't think ...that school doesn't have anything formal like that and I think they probably would have benefited from having something like that...yeah. [OK] Just with you know, your evacuation program and you know, the lab and ...computer lab... and this is how you do this and if you need to book this, this is what you need to do.

\*MARILYN

Just the process-procedure type stuff [Yes]. Oh, OK.

\*ALISON

Which we've got...but it's been sort of like ...through osmosis (laughter) yeah.

\*MARILYN

Osmosis...we do a lot by osmosis though.

\*ALISON

Well really...doing something wrong... (Laughter) or forgetting that you had to go somewhere...or do something...[yeah, yeah]...but not that you know, they've been ...you know, I haven't been stood out \side the principal's office or anything like that...

\*MARILYN

But it would be easier for you if you didn't have to go through that mistake –making process first [yeah, yeah]...yes. OK. Um...we looked at the concept map...yeah...yeah... have you actually changed your views of, say what...you had very...quite specific views of what a teacher was, or what a good teacher was. Has any of that changed or are you still aspiring to be a certain type of ...teacher? Have you changed that at all?

\*ALISON

Um... I think...No. I think I have a... I still have those aspirations... I think I'm...have a ...um...a much better understanding of the things that stop...that can hinder [oh, ok] that process um...or not so much hinder it but I can understand how that can get lost sometimes [right] in the day to day...the sheer weight of having to organise... and to get through the day...and that's why I really want to set up ...I thought no, I've got to get back to doing that reflection every single day.. I need to do it for myself... [ok, yeah. Yep] um...I'm still really happy with the way that I include children in the decision-making process, you know, so I'm still really, really strong on that...that we need to do this because ...you know,,, or what do you think we should do now....or this is our class and we need to decide ..and [yeah] yeah, so ...and while I can see that it would be much easier and probably comfortable for me to just walk in and go, (clap) right, that's it ...this is what you're doing, write it up on the board, right go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go....and my kids are like that too, I mean if you have a lot to get through, they will just ooh, ooh, yeah, do this, do this [yeah?] and then I'll just sort of think well at some stage you need to take that time and just have a bit of a chat and how's everything going and yeah...so I think... that ...yes, I have a much healthier respect that it's going to be a long process ..[OK]... Yeah, but no, I still have those ideas and I haven't really changed ...

\*MARILYN

So the gap between what you're doing and what you set out...your ideals and your price ...doesn't look unbridgeable?

\*ALISON

No, no... and I think...and I can see a time ...ah, maybe not this term, but in say like ..in Term 2 or Term 3, I can see a time where I think this is going to work really , really well, and we've just got to work through those little steps to get us to that point...and I'll know my kids well enough; they will trust me enough, you know, we will have those sorts of ...that sort of relationship ..so no, I can see my way past what's happening now...to see where it's all going to be set up.

\*MARILYN

So in that ...your career aspiration as such...has that changed at all? What you had in mind...

\*ALISON

Absolutely....[It has ? (with surprise)] Yeah, I cannot think [oh how interesting] I cannot think more than this first year....[oh ok] yeah...and I've got that thesis done I thought, that's it, then I was thinking oh, should start thinking about Ph D and I just thought I cannot get my head around that at all (laughter) ...um,.. [Yeah...OK] Yeah, so I think...but...but that's just something about me as well.. like I've never been one of those people... that gets a job now and thinks "If I do this, this, and this, in five years this job will take me to here..." and I have never been one of those people [Yeah, yeah that's interesting] I have always been...this is my job and I'm going to give it 100 per cent right here, right now. So I really haven't thought about career aspirations. [Yeah] But I mean, that comes from being older as well I think..[yes] just sort of talk about, you know...and having that understanding that as you go higher and higher up, the politics of any workplace becomes more and more draining, and you spend more of your time dealing, you know, with [You have to fight to get back to the classroom (laughter)] Yes, yeah...and to get back to those things...and I've done that...[yes] I've done that in two or three different jobs and I have that understanding that, you know, as you go up that becomes a bigger part of your job and I'm not interested in that right at the moment.

\*MARILYN

OK. So you're happy... teaching.

\*ALISON

I'm happy teaching...yeah, yeah...and although I know that there's all different options .you know, if I wanted to ...and I should be a bit more proactive.. I should be going to all the you know, like the new teachers this ...and their cocktail parties, and doing a bit of schmoozing and ...because you know that that's what people do ,...[Yeah] if they want to get ahead, most of the time.. [yeah] ..no, I just think, I'm just happy in my little classroom and in my little school and yeah...I don't have time for anything else..

\*MARILYN

That's what you expected to be? This is...

\*ALISON

I don't know...I think so...[yeah] ...I would not have said that at the beginning of the four years of the course because I didn't go in there with that burning desire ..I'm going to, you know, I've wanted to be a teacher ever since I was eight years old [yeah] ....as opposed to Cate you know, who went through it at a very early age and had that really clear idea of what she wanted to do and you know, the field that she wanted to work in....and I just never had that. [Yeah, yeah]. Um...so I never really planned a career like that...um...yeah and I always thought you know, like, it doesn't have to be a teaching job... you know, I can go into this field and that field and yeah...but there's certainly something about, you know, well now let's get in and apply it..[yeah, yeah. Yeah]

\*MARILYN

Well, you sound as though you're just plain enjoying your kids?

\*ALISON

Yeah, they are really...it's strange how you get attached to them so quickly [yeah, you do] yeah, and as individuals, too... you know, not in the, you know, cuddly, mothering sort of way which is, you know, that sort of...oh I'm sure some people think, oh you know, thirty-four, and single, and no children, then obviously you know, she's...you know, filling that sort of need....and I thought, no it's not that at all, I've never been particularly ...

\*MARILYN

Has anybody mentioned that?

\*ALISON

No (surprised)...no ...really...

\*MARILYN

That's interesting...so nobody's seeing it as a disadvantage that you don't have children?

\*ALISON

No, well because I have teachers...no, I have teachers there at the school ...who are five or ten years older than me and ..who're even in relationships but have no children themselves and ...so I don't think ...and I suppose that's something about being in a bigger area, you have people that make different choices, or more people that have [yes] you know, non-traditional choices [yeah]...so no, it hasn't seen it but.... yeah, I mean.... some people I think did question it, especially back home, [oh, ok].. I sort of think, no, you know, I don't love children or anything like that...I have a healthy respect for children as individuals and you see that now, um.. you can almost see... what these children are going to be like in you know, five or ten years time, and they're their own little people [yeah] you know, and you've got to treat them like that...yeah. So, but though they are lovely...they're very nice [Good, great!]

\*MARILYN

OK. Um... the only thing I just wanted to know...you ..you've gained lots and lots of different sorts of knowledge...[yep]and that's sort of coming out in this...where do you go ...what are your sources of information if you are stuck?

\*ALISON

If I'm stuck? [If you're stuck]. Other teachers. Absolutely. [OK, yeah]. Um...I either go and see ...but I've already chosen those teachers that I feel comfortable with ...[yeah, OK, yep] that I think that I can go and talk to and ...depends on what it is, too. If it's to do with my gifted and talented boys, I go and have a talk to the lady who's looking at the gifted and talented...so, you go to all those different places...[yeah] um...yeah...because I'm sharing a flat with a guy I went to university with, and he's at another school, and he also has a Year 2, [oh, yeah] so like, we get home and we just go —you would not believe what my kids did today” and he goes —oh, no...”you know, and we're both finding the one thing that we sort of say, oh, we raise our voices much more that we ever thought that we would.

\*MARILYN

Right, OK. You mean...raising it to get over the noise...or raising it because you've lost it? Well, not lost it...but...

\*ALISON

Both. Oh ...not lost it... but yeah, if there's something like, sit down, no, you do not do that in this classroom...[Ok] yeah... that sort of thing so..

\*MARILYN

Yeah...so it's being more...firmer than you expected to be?

\*ALISON

Firmer, yeah. Yeah...and I suppose too that comes from um...because I always had Stage 3 ...like my big pracs have been Stage 3 [Of course] so you have that capacity to do a lot more negotiation and you're responsible , you choose, this sort of thing [yeah] and they have a lot more control ...but you know, my kids just...you know...some days are ...push....Ah...{laughter} stop...everybody down on the ground...we do not push in this classroom [tapping to emphasise each word]...it is never OK to push....and ...[yeah]..there are those sort of ...that's probably the biggest thing...but it's really nice to be able to have that...just sit down and just go ...oh, [yes] it is...and to have somebody that you can talk to and I think —bitch” is the best word about it,[yes] and I still think, you're very aware as you come into a new place that you really don't have the capacity to do that...you don't know people well enough...to know who ...will, either (a) agree with you, or (b) not go and tell everybody [tell

everybody else, that's the issue] or ..yeah...so that being able to ...when you just need to ...just get it out...yeah, or just like —can't believe I did that..."[I have a husband...we just...that's what we do] I bet you do...yeah....oh well, things that you want to tell somebody that you don't necessarily want to tell somebody at school because you're really worried that it was a bad....oh, not a bad thing...but...yeah, you don't want people to think that this is you [yes, yeah] or ...yeah [oh yeah]...interesting. So you're still very much minding your p's and q's and... as you do with everybody I mean, you know, this is the little Alison [pseudonym] person as far as these people at school know and they don't know a lot about me and those sort of things...so you're really sort of setting up that persona.

\*MARILYN

So you're letting bits of yourself out gradually...?

\*ALISON

Absolutely. And I think everybody does that...you know, I'm a different daughter than I am sister than I am friend [oh yes] than I am...yes, so I mean, oh, we do that in all different ways ...in every relationship that we have...you know...we determine, you know, well, what sort of person am I going to be...[Yeah} in this situation so..

\*MARILYN

Do you feel as though you're being too different...from your....you can be yourself? There's scope?

\*ALISON

Nooo....Yes.... yeah, yeah...probably the things...there is scope...but I would say ...it's probably the things you think will make people think you're not a good teacher [Mm?] that you try to keep to yourself...like the things that are particularly worrying you, like ...I don't know if I'm doing this right ...and things like that...and you \_re sort of letting that out...you know, go quietly ...quietly...quietly....and then, I really need help now...

\*MARILYN

Yeah...I'm just thinking...the things that you are most concerned about, you feel least able to ask about?

\*ALISON

Yeah...but that's...and I don't think that's anything from the school either, that's just...that whole thing from yourself, it's like not wanting to admit...

\*MARILYN

It's your own self-esteem as a teacher...is it?

\*ALISON

Yeah, yeah...oh yeah...it could be ...I'm not sure about self-esteem but yeah, you set really, really high um...goals and ideals for yourself and you just sort of think. Aw... you know, I don't know if I really want to ...[let that one out?] Yeah...but I'm feeling more able to be able to do that... and ...yeah....and I'll...yeah, once I get this program...once I finish what I want to do this weekend, I \_m going to actually then have a talk to ...'cause I've got.. I've got the people who are on my probationary panel

\*MARILYN

Oh...what's a probationary ...I don't know what a probationary panel is.

\*ALISON

Well, I'm on twelve months probation [Yes, yeah] and that means I have to do a review at the end of

twelve months [right] and the support people on my probationary panel at the school...and so I'm actually going...and that's the principal, the deputy ....um and two other teachers... [oh, OK, Mm] both within the junior school...so I will actually um...once I get that sort of dealt with, once I feel comfortable enough in what I'm doing, then I'm going to go sometime this week and go and see the principal and say, I would really like ....while I've got to have...[comment to waitress] um...the ..I want to go to him just work out a system where somebody can come in...peruse my program and then come into my classroom... and tell me what else can I be doing at the...is what I'm doing really sing what I'm setting out to do [yep] you know, and my guided reading groups...am I just keeping three groups busy while I work with one group [yes] or am I actually targeting something...and that's what I feel...that's what I want now...but that is a terrifying thing to do [yeah] and while I recognise that it's necessary, that's ...it's a hard thing to say I want somebody to come in and have a look [oh yes] and really you know, get in and ...[it's very brave] it is, but terrifying at the same time[yes, it is] and that's my next step...is I want to set some sort of program up so where I can have that you know, on the understanding that I want to use that probationary period as a learning experience but then knowing that also you want it to be an absolutely pristine thing because you don't want anything negative on that report. . on the way through [yes , that's..] And you sort of wish ...I...me myself wish I was one of those people that could just waltz along and never self-question, never critically reflect...and just think that I'm doing a fantastic job...and never really...yeah, and there are times when you sort of think, geez that'd be nice...to do that... and not have any sort of self-doubt or those sorts of things...so that's my next thing that I would like to do is once...now that I've got to know the kids and I'm a little bit more comfortable with them, and they're with me, so I'm feeling a little bit like...you know, this is our place...and this is how we do things...so I've got that bit of confidence ...now I'd actually like somebody to come in and help me and say...what can I do to make this better...you know, am I doing what I need to do.

\*MARILYN

If you didn't invite them in, is there a system in the school where they would come in anyway...as a...under supervision?

\*ALISON

Well...they are starting to so this um...as part of their ...I think it's part of professional... and I don't know a lot because I don't know a lot about the system...but they are doing this thing called Professional Pathways where each teacher now has...sets yearly priorities and they have certain school priorities and personal priorities and I don't have to actually do...ah, participate in that this year ...because the department's or my school's opinion is, just to go through your induction and going through first year...that's enough...for you...you know, like, not to set other you know, major priorities...like for PD and things... they said...by the time you've finished your induction program and do everything that we're going to make you do for probation [mm] that's enough. But they do have those systems and one of those systems is ...to actually have people come in and observe...but ....and as with everything, you know, that there are mixed reactions to that [oh yeah] yeah...as to what they want. How people are taking that...yeah, so ...you get used to that a lot in ACT...(comment re environment of interview... subject of comment not remembered).

\*MARILYN

I have in a sense covered what I was ...I was just hoping to get a real overview of where you're at and what you've ...what's changed for you...you know, how you're going....

\*ALISON

I'm tentatively teaching...(Laughter)...would be about it.

\*MARILYN

Yeah...that's what I was going to ask you...would you like ...have you got something that you would like...how do you sum up the first six weeks of teaching?

\*ALISON

Tentatively teaching.

\*MARILYN

Tentatively teaching...OK...yeah

\*ALISON

Yeah...and I can see that it's ...where I'm going, which is good, but it's just getting that...getting all the pieces together to get that whole ...the whole picture. I can see little fragments and I know it's all going to come together, but it's just getting it there. Yeah. So...

\*MARILYN

It's exciting...thank you.

\*ALISON

No problem at all.

END OF TAPE.

Appendix F      List of Project Nodes

NVivo Nodes

NVivo revision 1.3.146 Licensee: Faculty of Education

Project: Beg Tchr User: Marilyn Date: 12/07/2009 - 7:52:16 PM

NODE LISTING

Nodes in Set: All Tree Nodes

Created: 8/07/2006 - 11:10:54 AM

Modified: 8/07/2006 - 11:10:54 AM

Number of Nodes: 110

1 (1) /Participant Data

Description: Identification of interviewees

2 (1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee

Description: Individual participant in interview

3 (1 1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Casual teacher

Description: Teacher employed from day to day without security of tenure or location

4 (1 1 1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Casual teacher/time teaching

Description: Time spent as teacher in relation to career entry stages (early, mid, late )

5 (1 1 1 1 1) /Participant Data

/Individual interviewee/Casual teacher/time teaching/one term

Description: Within the first term of teaching (ie early entry stage)

6 (1 1 2) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Contract or temporary teacher

Description: Teacher employed at one school for block of work of a term or more

7 (1 1 2 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Contract or temporary teacher/time spent

Description: Time employed as temporary teacher

8 (1 1 2 1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Contract or temporary teacher/time spent/one term

Description:

One term ie a block of work within one school

9 (1 1 2 1 2) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/Contract or temporary teacher/time spent/one year

10 (1 1 3) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher

Description: Teacher employed with security of tenure and location

11 (1 1 3 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher/time teaching

Description: Time since initial employment

12 (1 1 3 1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher/time teaching/one term

Description: Within early entry stage ie within first term of teaching

13 (1 1 3 1 2) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher/time teaching/More than 1 term

Description:

In mid or later entry stage - ie beyond the first term of teaching

14 (1 2) /Participant Data/gender

15 (1 2 1) /Participant Data/gender/male

16 (1 2 2) /Participant Data/gender/female



- 17 (1 3) /Participant Data/School  
 18 (1 3 1) /Participant Data/School/private  
 19 (1 3 2) /Participant Data/School/public  
 20 (4) /Pre-service training  
 Description:  
 General perceptions of pre-service training
- 21 (4 1) /Pre-service training/gains  
 Description:  
 Value or gains of pre-service training perceived by practising teachers in early months
- 22 (4 2) /Pre-service training/internship  
 Description:  
 Comments about internship compared with practice
- 23 (4 3) /Pre-service training/gaps  
 Description:  
 Gaps in knowledge perceived as arising from inadequate or ineffectual pre-service courses.
- 24 (5) /Career entry  
 Description:  
 General conditions at career entry
- 25 (5 1) /Career entry/Casual teaching  
 Description:  
 General perceptions of casual teaching
- 26 (5 1 1) /Career entry/Casual teaching/Disadvantages  
 Description:  
 Perceived disadvantages of casual teaching
- 27 (5 1 2) /Career entry/Casual teaching/advantages  
 Description:  
 Perceived advantages of casual teaching
- 28 (5 2) /Career entry/Permanent teaching  
 Description:  
 Perceived advantages of permanent teaching
- 29 (5 2 1) /Career entry/Permanent teaching/disadvantages  
 Description:  
 Perceived disadvantages of permanent teaching
- 30 (5 3) /Career entry/Temporary or contract teaching  
 Description:  
 Perceptions about contract or temporary teaching appointments
- 31 (5 3 1) /Career entry/Temporary or contract teaching/Advantages  
 Description:  
 Perceived advantages of temporary or contract teaching
- 32 (6) /Career planning  
 Description:  
 Future career plans
- 33 (6 2) /Career planning/Choosing teaching  
 Description:  
 General ideas about teaching as a career

- 34 (7) /Beginning teaching  
Description:  
General comments about process of beginning teaching
- 35 (7 4) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge  
Description:  
General knowledge of teaching; initial understandings
- 36 (7 4 4) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching  
Description:  
areas included in concept map drawn by participants in the course of interviews
- 37 (7 4 4 1) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/behaviour management  
Description:  
Behaviour management as a concern or a learning
- 38 (7 4 4 2) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication  
Description:  
Concern with communication in general
- 39 (7 4 4 2 1) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/parents  
Description:  
Concern with communication with parents
- 40 (7 4 4 2 2) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/staff  
Description:  
Concern with communication with other staff
- 41 (7 4 4 2 3) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/students  
Description:  
Concern with communication with students
- 42 (7 4 4 3) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/time management  
Description:  
Capacity to manage time and pressure of work
- 43 (7 4 4 4) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/assessment & reporting  
Description:  
Capacity to carry out assessment and reporting policies and procedures
- 44 (7 4 4 5) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/pedagogy  
Description:  
Knowledge of general teaching practice
- 45 (7 4 4 6) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/curriculum knowledge  
Description:  
Knowledge of required syllabus and curriculum
- 46 (7 4 4 7) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/programming & planning

Description:  
Capacity to develop appropriate plans and programs

47 (7 4 4 8) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/School policies

Description:  
Knowledge of school policies

48 (7 4 4 9) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/In school support

49 (8) /Professional knowledge base

Description:  
Professional knowledge in general: links to theory

50 (8 1) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge

Description:  
Copy of node (7 4) .

51 (8 1 2) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/curricular knowledge

Description:  
Knowledge of curriculum and syllabus - content knowledge - links to theory

52 (8 1 2 2) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/curricular knowledge/Planning and programming

Description:  
Knowledge of planning and programming in initial stages as part of professional knowledge base

53 (8 1 2 7) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/curricular knowledge/curriculum knowledge

Description: Knowledge of both curriculum (disciplinary) content and syllabus content at start of career

54 (8 1 3) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/pedagogical content knowledge

Description: Knowledge of specific pedagogy appropriate to specific curriculum areas: links to theory

55 (8 1 3 6) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/pedagogical content knowledge/instructional strategies

Description: Early attempts at appropriate pedagogical content knowledge and the instructional strategies suited to curriculum content

56 (8 1 4) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge

Description: General knowledge of teaching practice: links to theory

57 (8 1 4 1) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/assessment & reporting

Description: Early knowledge of how to assess student progress and how to report progress

58 (8 1 4 2) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/behaviour management

Description: Early experience and knowledge of how to manage student behaviour

59 (8 1 4 3) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/Pedagogy

Description: Early understanding & knowledge of pedagogy (teaching strategies, curriculum knowledge, knowledge of students)

- 60 (8 1 4 4) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/classroom organisation  
Description: Knowledge of how to set up and maintain an initial effective classroom and how to manage resource organisation
- 61 (8 1 4 5) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/student learning  
Description: Knowledge of how students learn- early stages of understanding
- 62 (8 1 4 6) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/pedagogical reasoning  
Description: Capacity to make decisions based on knowledge and experience in teaching: increasing efficacy
- 63 (8 1 4 8) /Professional knowledge base/Practical Knowledge/general pedagogical knowledge/Student welfare  
Description: Knowledge of student welfare policies, procedures and strategies in early situations
- 64 (8 6) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst  
Description: Knowledge of school-specific policies, procedures, values and practices; understanding of relationships and politics
- 65 (8 6 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/institutional context  
Description: Professional knowledge of institutional context of teaching - early understandings of schools, systems.
- 66 (8 6 1 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/institutional context/communication  
Description: Professional knowledge of communication within institutional contexts- early efforts
- 67 (8 6 1 1 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/institutional context/communication/parents  
Description: Communication with parents as part of professional knowledge base or skill
- 68 (8 6 1 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/institutional context/knowledge of administration  
Description: Early understandings & knowledge of administrative structures and procedures as part of professional knowledge base
- 69 (8 6 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/perceptions of school culture  
Description: General perceptions of school culture
- 70 (8 6 2 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/perceptions of school culture/positive  
Description: Positive perceptions of school culture
- 71 (8 6 2 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/perceptions of school culture/difficulties  
Description: Difficulties experienced as a result of aspects of school culture
- 72 (8 6 3) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/in-school support  
Description: Support provided from within school sources or resources

- 73 (8 6 3 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/in-school support/Peer mentoring  
Description: Peer mentoring as a source of in-school support
- 74 (8 6 3 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/in-school support/professional development  
Description: Professional development as a source of in-school support (within school or outside provision)
- 75 (8 6 11) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/induction & development processes  
Description: General processes of induction as sources of development, supervision and mentoring
- 76 (8 6 12) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/Staff  
Description: Other teachers who provide formal & informal information / support
- 77 (8 6 12 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/Staff/Staff as providers of resources  
Description: Knowledge about resources gained from other staff
- 78 (8 6 12 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/Staff/Staff as providers of support  
Description: Personal and professional support provided by other staff
- 79 (8 6 12 3) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of school as a social syst/Staff/Staff as sources of information  
Description: Communication of information provided, often informally, by other staff.
- 80 (8 7) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self  
Description: Professional identity; knowledge of self-as teacher - developing with experience
- 81 (8 7 14) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self  
82 (8 7 14 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/initial problems  
Description: Perceptions of problems in early entry stage
- 83 (8 7 14 1 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/initial problems/communication with parents  
Description: Communication with parents perceived as problem in early stage of teaching
- 84 (8 7 14 1 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/initial problems/quantity of work  
Description: Amount of work "drowning" beginning teachers perceived as problem
- 85 (8 7 14 1 3) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/initial problems/illness  
86 (8 7 14 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/Career choice  
Description: Reasons for selecting teaching as a career
- 87 (8 7 14 2 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/Career choice/personal factors  
Description: Personal or family reasons for selecting teaching as a career
- 88 (8 7 14 3) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/Beliefs about teaching  
Description: Beliefs about good teaching

89 (8 7 14 3 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/Beliefs about teaching/Images of teachers

Description: Images of teachers and teaching, either specific to known teachers or teachers in general, held by participants

90 (8 7 14 3 1 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/Beliefs about teaching/Images of teachers/self-image

Description: Image of self as teacher

91 (8 7 14 5) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/personal feelings

Description: Personal feelings in relation to self-efficacy / health

92 (8 7 14 5 1) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/personal feelings/positive

Description: Positive personal feelings in relation to beginning teaching

93 (8 7 14 5 2) /Professional knowledge base/knowledge of self/Knowledge of self/personal feelings/negative

Description: Negative personal feelings in relation to beginning teaching

94 (9) /acquisition of professional knowledge

Description:

General comments on process of acquiring new professional knowledge

95 (9 1) /acquisition of professional knowledge/influence of past experiences

Description: Past experience e.g. during pre-service training or employment as source of professional knowledge

96 (9 2) /acquisition of professional knowledge/influence of beliefs, attitudes, images

Description: Influence of own beliefs and attitudes on development of professional knowledge base

97 (9 3) /acquisition of professional knowledge/influence of pre-service program

Description: Pre-service education course as source of professional knowledge

98 (9 4) /acquisition of professional knowledge/influence of practica

Description: Pre-service practica and internships as source of professional knowledge

99 (9 5) /acquisition of professional knowledge/influence of current experience

Description: Development of professional knowledge from current experience as teacher

100 (9 6) /acquisition of professional knowledge/learning from students

Description: Development of professional knowledge from consideration of student learning and progress

101 (9 9) /acquisition of professional knowledge/ways of learning to teach

Description:

Different ways in which participants had learned new strategies in teaching

102 (9 9 1) /acquisition of professional knowledge/ways of learning to teach/reflection on practice

Description: Role of reflection on practice as a means of improving teaching practice

103 (9 9 7) /acquisition of professional knowledge/ways of learning to teach/Learning from other staff

Description: Contact with staff colleagues as source of professional knowledge

104 (9 9 8) /acquisition of professional knowledge/ways of learning to teach/Reading

105 (10) /Precipitating conditions for change

Description: Why changes in professional knowledge or practice have occurred

106 (10 1) /Precipitating conditions for change/Conditions for change

Description: Prevailing conditions that led to changes in practice and therefore changes in knowledge base

107 (10 2) /Precipitating conditions for change/Cognitive processes and supports for

Description: Reasoning processes or cognitive dissonance as provokers of change in practice and knowledge

108 (10 3) /Precipitating conditions for change/links between knowledge and practice

Description: Cognitive consonance or dissonance arising in practice as basis for change in practice and/or knowledge

109 (10 4) /Precipitating conditions for change/employment context and learning

Description: Influence of employment context on changes in professional knowledge and/or practice

110 (10 5) /Precipitating conditions for change/Changes

Description: Self-perceived changes in professional knowledge

Appendix G      Sample of Coded Text



NVivo revision 1.3.146Licensee: Faculty of Education

Project: Beg Tchr User: MarilynDate: 12/07/2009 - 8:12:17 PM

## DOCUMENT CODING REPORT

**Document:** INTERV 1 PV

Created: 8/07/2006 - 11:12:50 AM

Modified: 16/01/2009 - 3:57:35 PM

Description:

\* No Header

Nodes in Set: All Nodes

Node 1 of 111(1 1) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee

Passage 1 of 1 Section 0, Paras 1 to 2, 47 chars.

- 1: Interview with Helen
- 2: Saturday 29 November 2003
- 3:

Node 2 of 111(1 1 3) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher

Passage 1 of 1 Section 0, Paras 1 to 2, 47 chars.

- 1: Interview with Helen
- 2: Saturday 29 November 2003
- 3:

Node 3 of 111(1 1 3 1 2) /Participant Data/Individual interviewee/permanent teacher/time teaching/More than 1 term

Passage 1 of 1 Section 0, Paras 1 to 2, 47 chars.

- 1: Interview with Helen
- 2: Saturday 29 November 2003
- 3:

Node 4 of 111(1 2 2) /Participant Data/gender/female

Passage 1 of 1 Section 0, Paras 1 to 2, 47 chars.

- 1: Interview with Helen
- 2: Saturday 29 November 2003
- 3:

Node 5 of 111(1 3 2) /Participant Data/School/public

Passage 1 of 1 Section 0, Paras 1 to 2, 47 chars.

- 1: Interview with Helen
- 2: Saturday 29 November 2003
- 3:

Node 6 of 111(4) /Pre-service training

Passage 1 of 3 Section 0, Paras 89 to 97, 3177 chars.

89: Mm...management, I think [ok] definitely in the management of things...because at uni you learn how to put a unit together and ...um...how to assess to an extent...although I found that difficult now that I'm out there...um...because I thought I was...I knew how to assess a child but when you then back them up against all their samples of work...like, every time we assessed at uni, you'd assess them on one subject against maybe six samples of work, because you have only six weeks with a child, and you sort of, oh ok...whereas when you look at them across the year, now when I'm writing reports a lot of them are not always consistent, so where you say oh yes, they can read, oh but they can't transfer this to that and they can't, you know.... So the assessment side of things...and it's nice and easy to assess one child, but when you've got twenty-six of them and you're continually trying to assess that's one of my major things that I've had to deal with this year, but definitely with management because I think you can be told how to do things so many times with management. With your units, you write them, you get them marked and you sort of think, yeah, I could really put that together and I have been able to put those together and use them, but with management things happen that no-one can ever predict, or tell you that...you know...that this is going to happen and I think a lot of the time at uni they talk about smaller groups of children...that in reality is out there...and I know a lot of the teachers who hadn't been in schools for a while seem to ....and also the behaviour of children and the attitude of children...it's changed...it's not what it used to be...and they ...the teachers, like, the lecturers who hadn't been teachers for a while we're sort of ...a little bit like...oh yes, you'll ...you know, be able to do all these wonderful things and you get in there and you think yeah I could, except that those two children really can't cope with this and you know, you have to deal with those sort of issues...like, with Kindergarten it was crying, one little boy who continually ran out of the classroom... all through...just hid...under the tables or under a cupboard or...you know, and we'd all sort of start you know, "Oh, where'd he go?" and "What's going on here?" And those kids who are really high maintenance in your classroom make it very hard for you to manage the rest of them effectively.

90:

91: M:

92: So that was, if you like, unexpected?

93:

94: H:

95: In a way. Like, I thought yeah, this would be difficult but I don't think you can ever predict what each individual child's going to do...and...one of my children who's quite OK, we ...a new parent helper came into the classroom when we'd just started introducing parent helpers, and he just couldn't cope with that idea that new people would be coming into the classroom. It took him almost a term for us to introduce new people into the classroom so it's things like that that you just don't think about...you think, you know, oh...great, I'm going to have some help today and I'm going to do these wonderful reading groups that I've got all these activities planned and then something like that happens where a child just really can't handle the idea.

96:

97: M:

98:

---

*Passage 2 of 3*

Section 0, Paras 194 to 197, 2885 chars.

194: So what were the specialised fields?

195:

196: H:

197: Special education? [oh, ok.. yeah], creative arts...and practical arts...which is what I would have done if I didn't do the honours course...and I did...um...and then there was honours...and there was...oh I don't know...ESL and TESOL [oh, ok] there were all those sort of things...so all the little specialised fields and people liked doing those but they just felt that the rest of the course probably shouldn't have even been there and they probably just should have done their specialised filed in the last year and not worried about anything else...which would have been great if I was doing honours, like...it would have been good...just to concentrate on that and not worry about the rest of the course...but I don't know...yeah, a lot of it's transferred...like I do use ...I use actual units from ...that I've written, and all I do is bring them to the right level for my kids...and even within a unit I've got things that I know half the class can do and I know half the class won't be able to do...so you come up with two activities ...so you know, half of them do one thing and half of them do

another...but yeah...a lot of it ...a lot of things that I thought wouldn't work, did...like, they used to ...our science teacher used to always say....you know, design and make is the most important part of the science unit and it's very...you know, you've got to get the kids to use things and be hands-on...when I got given a Kindergarten class, I thought...no way...there's no way I'm ever doing design and make and then we did this toys unit and they were really enthusiastic about it...they loved it...they brought in all their toys and we talked about which ones move and everything ...and one of the suggestions for the unit was to make a doll's house ...and I thought oh no...and we did it and we did it in small groups and the room looked like a bomb had hit it...it was so bad it was so messy... for two hours they had to work on it [ok] ...they came up with these fantastic little models of doll's houses with little garages on them, and bathrooms and bedrooms and they'd thought about all the things we talked about with ..you know, bathrooms, bedrooms, what else would you need in the house ...and ...it was fantastic, and that was small group work...and they made one doll's house per group and then this term they've done hermit crab shelters because we've got hermit crabs in our classroom...and um they made this fabulous shelters and I...they were things from uni that I thought –That wouldn't work with a Kindergarten class,” and you've got to step out of your comfort zone and say, we'll give it a go, and now the other teachers have tried that whereas they also said, —Noo, I don't think that's a good idea,” and you know, and thinking of the optimism of youth, I thought, I'll give it a go and it worked so...those things have transferred...unit writing and programming have transferred really well...[ok]

198:

---

*Passage 3 of 3*

Section 0, Paras 354 to 358, 720 chars.

354: M:

355: So you would have lots of choices?

356:

357: H:

358: Yeah...I did at that point...um...I don't think I would have coped in the law course...probably could have got into one if I'd gone to UWS or something like that...academically I don't think I would have coped as well...because I found teaching was very ...I could understand everything in the ...I went through everything OK and I could write essays...and do all those sort of things ...journalism was another thing... my father really wanted me to go into journalism...he could see me up there as one of those TV presenters...[oh yeah] that was another one of my options that I sort of kept open...but, um, yeah...but no, I just got my heart set on teaching and just went, –That's it! Got to teach, so....!”

359:

---

*Node 7 of 111(4 1) /Pre-service training/gains*

*Passage 1 of 2*

Section 0, Paras 187 to 192, 3737 chars.

187: M:

188: How much of what you did at uni is transferring?

189:

190: H:

191: A lot...I'd say a lot because like I said, all the units and ...I found the first year of uni really frustrating because I wanted to be a teacher and I left school sort of like, I'm going to be a teacher and...(?) fabulous and went into my first year of teaching and all I did the whole ...of teacher training...and all I did the whole first year of uni was write essays about democracy...and you know, these sort of things...and no, this isn't teaching...I want teach some kids, you know, and we didn't do any prac and we just did all this theory and I was really sort of starting to get a bit...oh no, this isn't...this isn't teaching, this isn't what I want ...but now when I look back all of that background really helped me get through the rest of the course because I started to ...when we did get into the practical things, you'd look back and think oh yeah, but you need to make it fair...and you think, oh why am I thinking that ? And...oh that's because in the first year we did all that background...and a friend of mine who's only done ...she's done like a two year ...she's done a Bachelor of Arts and a two year Dip Ed...she said that she misses the fact that they've not done a lot of that background...and then we went into...like...and also that year a lot of the philosophies of education

and teaching, which now I draw on ...later on...and you start to think...oh yeah, I do use those even though I thought I never would [yeah] and then the second, third and fourth year I think the fourth year was the most frustrating for a lot of people...I was doing my honours degree at the same time so to me...yeah, it was as full as it could possibly be and um...there was plenty for me to do and I didn't have an issue with the primary course because I just was doing it and getting it done and getting on with my honours things...I was getting on with...like I was just doing it and I was getting good marks...well, I had to get good marks to get my honours to go still, because you still had to maintain a distinction average ...um...but I just didn't really take in the fact that it wasn't as fulfilling as the rest of the course ...and a lot of the people in it said ...if they'd finished after the third year, that would have been enough ...like, they sort of...did things that were very superficial in the fourth year and it was almost as if they were saying, well this is a four year course, so we've got to put this fourth year...so I think a lot of people felt like that...I never noticed it because I was just doing honours and just getting on with it...but the second and third year I really, really enjoyed my second and third year because we tutored children, we did lots of unit writing, lots of programming, lots of...and again with the programming they can never really prepare you for what it is from start to finish, but, you know, they did a lot of things with...yeah...we did a lot of course that were good...drama, and music and science and things that were really hands on and gave you really good ideas...like sport...every week we would do children's sport so it was just things that ...now I walk in and I think oh I'm teaching sport you know, Thursday afternoon...oh we'll play that game that we played when I was at uni, we really enjoyed that...and these kids would be able to do that or...you know...and it all transfers...but yeah, I think the fourth year looking back, yeah, we did silly things I reckon, we didn't really do anything that was all that interesting and useful ...I think they did just sort of put in the fourth year and I think that a lot of people were doing their specialised field ...and so the primary course itself wasn't all that filled up because it was more like, well, now you're doing your specialised field.. and..

192:

193:

---

*Passage 2 of 2*

Section 0, Paras 246 to 252, 1082 chars.

246: Well, the maths one's been interesting because I haven't really looked at it anywhere near as much as probably should have because it was all set out in the text book ...and um... the other thing, the issue we had was...we were sort of looking at the new syllabus at the same time as teaching the old syllabus...so I was trying not to get confused between the two so I'm sort of trying to look at that one. As far as English goes I worked completely off the syllabus in a sense, because I go through and sort of say, all right I'm going to do most of ...maybe, you know...one point one...but there'll be things in there that ...no, you'll think, oh no, I'll leave that till later or I'll draw on this from another one...but I'll sort of block out that, ok, mainly I'm doing that: block out the outcome, block out the indicators, and then do... brainstorm a whole heap of activities for the indicators... and ....

247:

248: M:

249: Where do you get those from?

250:

251: H:

252: The activities? Some from uni, a lot from uni, quite a lot from other teachers, and then some of them are just out of my head ...Bingo, that sort of thing.

253:

---

*Node 8 of 111(4 2) /Pre-service training/internship*

*Passage 1 of 2*

Section 0, Paras 19 to 23, 1018 chars.

19: M:

20: So Kindergarten's a challenge [Yes]...you haven't done much prac at that level or...?

21:

22: H:

23: I've actually only done the ...I did Year 6 for three weeks for one of my pracs, then I did Year 1 and a Kinder-Year 1 composite ...but the Kindergarten children were very much like Year 1 students ...they were very advanced. But I think the challenge was, I'd never gone in early in

Kindergarten...I'd always gone in the end of Term 2 and then the end of Term 4. [Right] At the end of Term 4 they're very much like Year 1 students [that's right] but at the very start it was a huge challenge because they all came in with very little knowledge of what school was, what it was like, you know...I remember the first day, walking in and sort of saying, OK everyone come and sit on the floor ..and that was the first problem ...it was just coming and sitting on the floor and crossing their legs and ...I'd never had that in a prac where they didn't understand that we put our hand up, we cross our legs, we line up...lining up was a challenge...

24:

---

*Passage 2 of 2*      Section 0, Paras 37 to 42, 635 chars.

37: M:

38: Did you do an internship of any sort?

39:

40: H:

41: Yeah...three weeks ...and that was my Kinder-Year 1 class...and we actually did three weeks with them in... at the end of Term 2, with a teacher in the classroom [yeah] but, like I was doing most of the teaching and she was just there to observe...and then at the end of the year we went back to the same class and did three weeks without a teacher or anything else...we did it all by ourselves...that was good as well because I saw how far they'd all come [oh yes] and it was sort of a ...you know, even socially, they'd changed a lot by the time I came back in the second half of the year. It was good...

42:

43:

---

Node 9 of 111(6) /Career planning  
*Passage 1 of 2*      Section 0, Paras 163 to 168, 971 chars.

163: M:

164: It sounds as though they have given you the leadership of the music...

165:

166: H:

167: Yes, very much...oh now...now particularly because this other teacher's left. Sort of said...and the principal wants to give me some time off next year to try and create some music units for them because she's very much um...our...one of our Assistant Principals is running all the sport and he does a wonderful job of that ..and the Science and Technology is very much on its feet and it feels like the Creative Arts are very much being left to nothing and she's very concerned about that, so....she's um ...somebody's coming from a drama background and somebody else from a dance background next year...so I should have more support next year as well. Because she has been...that's why I was hired and why this other teacher was hired because we both had musical backgrounds as well, [oh ok] and that's what they put in for...you know, hopefully someone that they could get as a targeted grad that was musical.

168:

169:

---

*Passage 2 of 2*      Section 0, Paras 337 to 341, 1844 chars.

337: M:

338: Five years down the track what would you like to be doing?

339: H:

340: I don't know...I'd like to have taught...five years down the track...I'd like to have taught in the primary...[ok] just for the experience...I like ...I don't ...I don't think I'm that fond of Kindergarten in itself...I've liked the challenge...I've really enjoyed the challenge but small children as compared to older children I think, I prefer talking to the older kids...when I've done primary choir and things, I've really enjoyed the social side of talking to them and they're a little bit more receptive, so yeah...but I'd really like to have...yeah...taught in the primary...and I don't know...eventually I think...maybe I wouldn't mind doing release...RFF [oh ok] and doing music...and doing drama and

visual arts across the school...I think that'd be fun...because I'd have a little bit more opportunity to be able to start up a band or do a choir properly and all those sort of things without having my own class...um... I don't know though...I'd...I'd like to see myself still at that school, I think...because at the moment if it stays the way it is with the dynamics...yeah...and definitely still in teaching...I don't have any major plans to be moving off teaching any time soon...and probably doing a bit more research at some stage...[oh ok] I'd like to go back into that...but not for a while...I'd like to really get my hand in with teaching first and really feel comfortable with everything...and ..um...you know, but yeah...eventually I think um...I don't want to ever be one of those teachers that's teaching because that's what they do...and they don't really like it any more but they're just there...I want to be one of those teachers who says, you know, oh well, I'm getting a little sick of this, I'm going to go find something else to do. So yeah...but I can't see myself doing that any time soon, I've really enjoyed it so far.

341:

342:

---

Node 10 of 111 (7 4 4) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching

*Passage 1 of 1* Section 0, Paras 383 to 384, 305 chars.

383: M:

384: That's probably...it's sort of what I've covered with other people...what I wondered...would you...could you do a concept map of what teaching means to you...what are the elements that make up teaching, um...what contributes to teaching, how does teaching impact on other parts of your life...would you be able to?

385:

---

Node 11 of 111 (7 4 4 2 1) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/parents

*Passage 1 of 1* Section 0, Paras 392 to 394, 1363 chars.

392: (Drawing concept map)

393: Um...it's definitely the staff [ok, yeah] and the exec...that contribute. It's the students, and the parents, or the community – not really just the parents...it's more ...because not all of them have mum and dad, but it's just a general...feel...and with the community it's things like, um, how much they support school events, and um...just the support of the curriculum that we're teaching...[oh yeah] because if they don't support those things and they don't support the curriculum, it adds to the morale...the whole feel...um...definitely with the staff it's the support and it's just the general morale...what else contributes to teaching?... personality...own personal traits...support from the curriculum/syllabus...and documents that go with that, or resources...your own social network...I think that's made a big difference to me this year as well, being able to jump on the internet or jump on the phone or go over to someone's house and say, wow, have you had this problem yet...or...[with other teachers?] you know, yeah...other teachers...[oh, ok] and even just friends, just mum, or whoever, and just say ,oh, I've had this awful day, but these kids did this and blah, blah, blah...or ...yeah, this didn't work out and just your social support, you know, your family and all those sort of people...what else? It's your own resourcefulness, I think, and creativity....

394:

395:

---

Node 12 of 111 (7 4 4 2 2) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/staff

*Passage 1 of 1* Section 0, Paras 392 to 394, 1363 chars.

392: (Drawing concept map)

393: Um...it's definitely the staff [ok, yeah] and the exec...that contribute. It's the students, and the parents, or the community – not really just the parents...it's more ...because not all of them have

mum and dad, but it's just a general...feel...and with the community it's things like, um, how much they support school events, and um...just the support of the curriculum that we're teaching...[oh yeah] because if they don't support those things and they don't support the curriculum, it adds to the morale...the whole feel...um...definitely with the staff it's the support and it's just the general morale...what else contributes to teaching?... personality...own personal traits...support from the curriculum/syllabus...and documents that go with that, or resources...your own social network...I think that's made a big difference to me this year as well, being able to jump on the internet or jump on the phone or go over to someone's house and say, wow, have you had this problem yet...or...[with other teachers?] you know, yeah...other teachers...[oh, ok] and even just friends, just mum, or whoever, and just say ,oh, I've had this awful day, but these kids did this and blah, blah, blah...or ...yeah, this didn't work out and just your social support, you know, your family and all those sort of people...what else? It's your own resourcefulness, I think, and creativity....

394:

395:

Node 13 of 111 (7 4 4 2 3) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of teaching/communication/students

*Passage 1 of 2* Section 0, Paras 375 to 376, 1217 chars.

375:

376: Yeah, definitely...and I think it helped having Kindergarten... 'cause they're so little and you look at them and they're so... you know, vulnerable to it all and they ...like, I've just got to be so careful what I say, because it just goes –Miss V said...blah, blah, blah" and you know, the parents are always coming up and saying, –But Miss V said..." you know, and they laugh and they even send me little notes, –Canyou please tell my child because then they'll do it" and I became aware of that very quickly...that...you know, if I raised my voice that didn't just mean me raising my voice ...that was like...you know, oh, she's getting angry at me...and you know...and so I became aware of it very, very quickly and I came up with little strategies that worked...like, ok we're going to read a story now...and that was as much for my benefit as it was for theirs...or we're going to sing a song...or ...you know, I still pull out the guitar sometimes when we're having a really bad day and ...start singing and getting them involved in that and as soon as they see that I'm coping with it, they start to cope with it, so ...yeah, but that was one big concern, that's something they don't work on in uni...I guess...like, your own personality...

377:

*Passage 2 of 2* Section 0, Paras 392 to 394, 1363 chars.

392: (Drawing concept map)

393: Um...it's definitely the staff [ok, yeah] and the exec...that contribute. It's the students, and the parents, or the community – not really just the parents...it's more ...because not all of them have mum and dad, but it's just a general...feel...and with the community it's things like, um, how much they support school events, and um...just the support of the curriculum that we're teaching...[oh yeah] because if they don't support those things and they don't support the curriculum, it adds to the morale...the whole feel...um...definitely with the staff it's the support and it's just the general morale...what else contributes to teaching?... personality...own personal traits...support from the curriculum/syllabus...and documents that go with that, or resources...your own social network...I think that's made a big difference to me this year as well, being able to jump on the internet or jump on the phone or go over to someone's house and say, wow, have you had this problem yet...or...[with other teachers?] you know, yeah...other teachers...[oh, ok] and even just friends, just mum, or whoever, and just say ,oh, I've had this awful day, but these kids did this and blah, blah, blah...or ...yeah, this didn't work out and just your social support, you know, your family and all those sort of people...what else? It's your own resourcefulness, I think, and creativity....

394:

395:

Node 14 of 111 (7 4 4 3) /Beginning teaching/Professional Knowledge/concept map of  
teaching/time management  
*Passage 1 of 1* Section 0, Paras 366 to 373, 958 chars.

366: M:

367: And how have you coped with a school, where you can't do that...

368:

369: H:

370: No...I think I've got better ...um [yeah]...during uni ...[ oh, ok, yeah] I think I started to feel, oh yeah, you know...things are a bit more flexible ...I still...I still focus very much on things...like the weekend that I do my program I get up at eight o'clock in the morning, and I'll work through till lunch time...come out...say hello to everyone, have lunch, go back in and work for several hours. I can sit and do something for several hours but I found with teaching, because you're changing things all the time you get excited by whatever's coming up next and you keep moving on and you're busy all the time and I like being busy ...and I like being organised ...so those skills of sort of...of being able to focus have been transferred into something completely different. But I was...I've always been concerned about keeping my patience and the temper side of things...



Appendix H      Communication with System Leaders

Appendix H1      Letter to District Superintendents and District Office  
staff

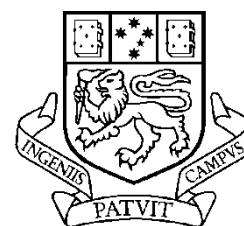
Appendix H2      Initial Letter to Principals of All Schools with Primary  
Students

Appendix H3      Follow-up Letter to Principals of All Schools with  
Beginning Teachers on Staff

Appendix H4      Letter Accompanying Survey Sent to Identified  
Beginning Teachers

*Appendix H1 Letter to District Superintendents and District Office Staff*

(Requesting permission to and assistance with contacting principals in primary schools across NSW)



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Mr XXXXXX  
District Superintendent  
XXXX District  
NSW Department of Education and Training

6 October 2003

Dear Mr XXXX

I am currently employed as principal of West Wyalong Public School and am also enrolled as a PhD student in the faculty of education at the University of Tasmania.

My research is concerned with the learning experiences of beginning primary teachers, and in particular, the influence of different employment contexts on their early development as teachers. I am currently working intensively with seven teachers who completed their primary teacher education program at CSU-Riverina in Wagga in 2002. I would now like to make contact with other beginning teachers who completed their teacher education program in 2002 (whether from CSU or elsewhere) and who are now working as casual, temporary or permanent teachers at public schools within the XXXX District, as well as other districts in rural, regional and metropolitan NSW.

I am seeking your permission to contact principals of these schools in order to request of them the numbers of beginning teachers now employed in their schools. I would also appreciate their assistance in subsequently distributing to these teachers a survey-questionnaire regarding their employment experience since leaving university to be completed anonymously and returned directly to the University of Tasmania. This would allow me to take into account a broader range of experience than that of my case study participants when considering the results and findings of my research.

I am enclosing copies of the approvals to conduct research provided by the Strategic Research Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Training

In the event that you are able to give permission for contact with principals of public schools in the Granville District, could I seek the help of District Office staff in faxing a copy of the attached letter and fax return sheet, from District Office to public schools in the district. I would be happy to reimburse the District Office for the cost of this service.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Pietsch

**Private Contact Details**

Address: 67 Park Street, West Wyalong, NSW, 2671 (h)  
West Wyalong Public School,  
Park Street,  
West Wyalong, NSW, 2671 (w)

Telephone: 02 6972 2157 (w)  
02 6972 2810 (h)  
04 2872 2810 (m)

e-mail: [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au) (h)  
[marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au) (w)

Letter to District Office Staff included in Letter to District Superintendents

Thank You

Dear District Office Staff

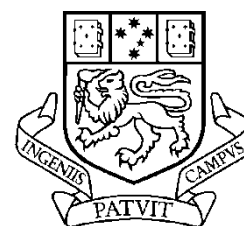
Thank you for your help in faxing the attached two pages (letter to principals and fax return sheet) to principals of primary schools in your District.

I appreciate very much your assistance with my research project.

Yours sincerely  
Marilyn Pietsch

*Appendix H2     Initial Letter to Principals*

(Requesting numbers of beginning teachers)



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

The Principals  
Public, Central and Community Schools  
XXXX District

Dear Colleague

Survey of Beginning Teachers  
Request for numbers of beginning teachers

I am currently employed as principal of West Wyalong Public School and am also enrolled as a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania. My research is concerned with the learning experiences of beginning teachers, and in particular, the influence of different employment contexts on their early development as teachers. I would like to make contact with beginning primary teachers who completed their teacher education course in 2002 and who are now working in your school as casual teachers, whether as day-to-day relief or filling part-time or full-time vacant positions, or as temporary or permanent teachers.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance in the distribution of a survey concerning the experiences of these beginning teachers during the first year of their teaching career. I would appreciate it if you could indicate on the attached fax return sheet the numbers of beginning teachers at your school. If you are happy to distribute surveys to these teachers, I will then send to your school the required number of surveys. The surveys are designed to be completed anonymously by teachers and returned directly to the University of Tasmania in reply paid envelopes.

This research has the approval of the NSW Department of Education and Training Strategic Research Directorate (SERAP NO. 02 160) and the Northern Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. Under the terms of approval by these bodies, I undertake to treat as highly confidential the survey responses, data and any identifying information, in terms of both storage and reporting of information. I am happy to discuss any aspect of my research with you or with teachers at your school, or to send a copy of the questionnaire should you have concerns or questions. Please contact me by one of the means below, leaving a suitable number or mail/email address, and a time convenient for you, if you would like me to contact you.

I am very aware that in making this request I am imposing on your time and that of your staff and I thank you in anticipation of your assistance.

Yours sincerely  
Marilyn Pietsch

West Wyalong Public School  
Telephone: 02 6972 2157 (w); Fax 02 6972 2818 (w)  
02 6972 2810 (h)  
E-mail: [marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au)

# Beginning Primary Teachers' Survey

## Fax

**To:** Marilyn Pietsch  
West Wyalong Public School

**From:** Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** 02 6972 2818

**Pages:** 1

**Phone:** 02 6972 2157

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐

There are **NO** beginning teachers at our school who:

- completed their primary (K-6) teacher training in 2002; and
- are now working at our school as beginning permanent, temporary, or casual relief teachers.

**OR**

I am willing to assist with the distribution of a survey to beginning primary (K-6) teachers at this school.

There is/are  teacher/s at our school who  
(number of teachers)

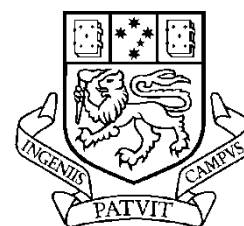
- completed their primary (K-6) teacher training in 2002; and
- are now working at our school as beginning permanent, temporary, or casual relief teachers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's signature)

*Appendix H3      Follow-up Letter to Principals*

(Letter Accompanying Survey)





University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Ms XXXX  
Principal  
XXXX School

Dear Ms XXXX

### **Survey of Beginning Teachers**

Thank you for your assistance with my research into the experiences of beginning teachers. I appreciate the time you have taken to identify the number of beginning teachers on your staff and your preparedness to assist with the distribution of surveys.

I have enclosed two surveys and would appreciate it if you would distribute it to the beginning teachers on your staff. Once completed, the surveys may be returned directly to the University of Tasmania and a reply paid envelope has been supplied with each survey for this purpose.

I am very aware that in making this request I am again imposing on your time and that of your staff and I thank you in anticipation of your assistance.

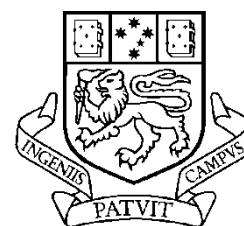
Thank you once again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Pietsch  
West Wyalong Public School  
Telephone: 02 6972 2157 (w); Fax 02 6972 2818 (w) 02 6972 2810 (h)  
E-mail: [marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:marilyn.pietsch@det.nsw.edu.au)

*Appendix H4 Letter Accompanying Survey*

(Letter to Beginning Teachers)



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Dear Teacher

I am currently employed as principal of West Wyalong Public School and am also enrolled as a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania, working with Professor John Williamson.

My research is concerned with the learning experiences of NSW primary teachers during their first year of teaching, and in particular, the influence of different employment contexts on their development as teachers. I would like to hear of the experiences of beginning teachers who completed their teacher education program in 2002 and who are now working as casual, temporary or permanent teachers at public or central schools in metropolitan, regional and rural NSW. As a beginning teacher your views are very important to my research.

I would be pleased if you would consider participating in this research by completing the attached survey, which I anticipate will take about 20 minutes of your time. Your participation is, of course, entirely voluntary. Confidentiality of the information you provide is assured, and there is no need for you to provide your name or school on the survey form. When you have completed the survey please return it in the —Reply Paid” envelope provided, if possible by the 31 October 2003, or as soon as you are able to.

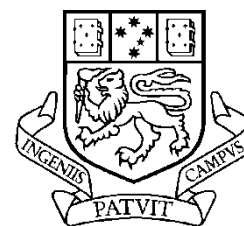
I am enclosing copies of the approvals to conduct research provided by the NSW Department of Education and Training as well as a more detailed information sheet about the purpose and processes of the study.

Should you have any questions in regard to this survey, I can be contacted by telephone on 02 6972 2810 (home); 02 6972 2157 (work); or by email [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au)

Thank you for your time in completing this survey and for your assistance with my research project.

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Pietsch



University of Tasmania  
School of Education

Information Sheet  
Participation in Ethical Research

Participants in Survey-questionnaire

Expanding the professional knowledge base of beginning teachers: The influence of differentiated experience on the development of competency in teaching.

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in this project. The following points are intended to provide you with information to assist you in deciding whether or not to continue with your participation and complete the attached survey-questionnaire.

*Background*

At present, I am employed by the NSW Department of Education and Training as principal at West Wyalong Public School and as such, I have been involved over several years with the internship program of Charles Sturt University and with supporting beginning teachers. I am completing this project as part of my studies towards the award of a doctor in philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in education at the University of Tasmania and as a way of assisting me to better support beginning teachers in my own school.

I believe that in participating in such a study together we would be able to contribute to current understanding of the ways in which beginning teachers in New South Wales acquire knowledge of teaching. It would also help in identifying ways in which other teachers in schools may best assist beginning teachers to move from novice to competent teacher during the early years of their careers. I believe it may also benefit participants to have a brief opportunity to reflect on their own experiences and perspectives as beginning teachers.

Marilyn Pietsch

*Name of chief investigator*

Professor John Williamson, as my supervisor, is the designated chief investigator while I will be the investigator to have direct involvement with research participants.

*Purpose of the study*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which beginning primary teachers in rural, regional and metropolitan schools in NSW acquire practical knowledge of teaching and thus develop competency in the classroom in their initial years of teaching in different teaching contexts as casual, temporary and permanent teachers.

The study will be based on the experience of beginning teachers in their initial years of primary teaching in schools in NSW following the completion of their teacher education courses in 2002. It is being undertaken in fulfilment of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in education.

*Study procedures*

The data on which this study is based is to be drawn from the experience of beginning teachers as reflected in their completion of the attached survey at the end of their first year of teaching. These data will be complemented by information gained from face-to-face interviews conducted over a two-year period with a small number of beginning teachers.

*Payment to subjects*

Participation in this project is voluntary and I am not able to offer you any payment.

*Possible risks or discomforts*

It is possible that you may experience some discomfort in reflecting on your teaching progress, especially if you have had personal difficulties during your initial year of teaching. While completing the survey-questionnaire attached, you are, of course, at liberty to omit responses to any question that causes you distress.

*Confidentiality*

Data obtained from surveys will be held in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office. Care has been taken to limit identification through codification of demographic information prior to data entry. Survey response sheets contain no identifying information other than an identity number. Only the researcher will have access to information identifying respondents from this ID number, and this information will be destroyed once data entry is complete.

*Freedom to refuse or withdraw*

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your employment and assessment within the NSW teaching service.

*Contact persons*

For further information about this project, please contact:

Professor John Williamson  
Faculty of Education  
University of Tasmania

Tel: 03 6324 3038  
e-mail: [John.Williamson@utas.edu.au](mailto:John.Williamson@utas.edu.au)

*Concerns or complaints*

Any concerns of an ethical nature or complaints about the manner in which the project is conducted may be referred to:

Professor Roger Fay  
Chair  
Northern Tasmania Social Sciences  
Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)  
Telephone: 03 6324 3576  
Executive Officer: Ms Amanda McAully (Tel: 03 6226 2763)

*Statement regarding approval*

This project has received ethical approval from the Northern Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee.

*Results of investigation*

If you would like to receive a summary of the results of the study, please contact Marilyn Pietsch via one of the contact addresses or numbers listed below.

*Information sheet and statement of informed consent*

You may keep a copy of this information sheet for your own records.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information.

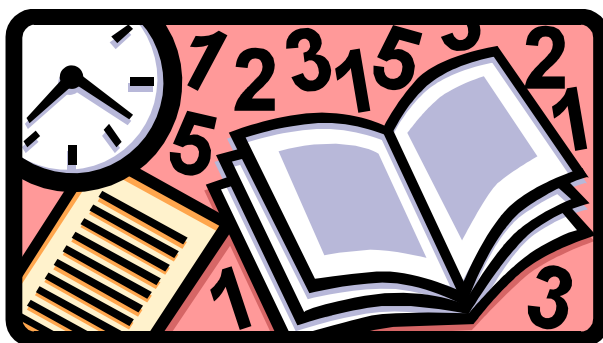
My contact details are as follows:

Marilyn Pietsch  
(home)  
Tel: 02 6972 2810  
Mob. 04 2872 2810  
Email: [bpietsch@westserv.net.au](mailto:bpietsch@westserv.net.au)

Appendix I      Survey-questionnaire

Beginning Teachers: The experience of beginning teachers in NSW

# Beginning teaching: The experience of primary teachers in NSW



Your assistance with the attached survey is greatly appreciated.

**Please return your completed responses in the Reply Paid envelope supplied**

**by Friday 14 November 2003**

**to**

**Professor John Williamson**

**Faculty of Education  
University of Tasmania  
Locked Bag 1307  
Launceston Tasmania 7250**



## SURVEY

## BEGINNING TEACHING

## SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

*The following questions ask you to provide some information about yourself and your teaching experience since leaving university (i.e. during Term 4 2002 and throughout 2003)*

**Question 1**

**Please circle the number of the category from the list below which best describes your teaching experience from Term 4, 2002 to Term 4, 2003. Please choose ONE category only.**

1. Mostly day-to-day casual relief
  2. A mixture of short blocks and day-to-day casual relief
  3. A series of long blocks of a term or more
  4. A part-time, temporary position for the full year (eg library, RFF)
  5. A temporary or contract class-based position for the full year
  6. A full-time permanent position as a targeted graduate
  7. A full-time permanent position (non-targeted)
  8. A part-time permanent position
  9. If none of the above categories adequately describes your experience please describe it below:
- 
- 

**Question 2**

**Please circle the number of the category below which best describes the school/s you have worked in from Term 4, 2002 to Term 4, 2003. Please choose ONE category only.**

1. A mixture of different public and private schools
2. Several different public schools
3. Several different private schools
4. Only one public school
5. Only one private school

**Question 3**

**Please circle the number of the category below which best describes your pre-service teacher education training. Please choose ONE category only.**

1. One year full-time (or equivalent part-time) eg Diploma in Education
2. Three years training
3. Four years training (eg B.Ed)
4. More than four years training
5. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

*Please turn to Page 3*

### Question 4

Which teacher education institution did you attend in 2002?

---

### Question 5

At the end of your teacher education course, to which of the following institutions did you apply for employment? You may select **MORE THAN ONE** category.

Please circle the number/s of the category or categories below that apply to you.

1. Catholic Education Office
2. NSW Department of Education and Training – permanent teacher
3. NSW Department of Education and Training – casual teacher
4. An independent school
5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

### Question 6

This question looks at your experience prior to commencing your teacher education course. Please circle the number/s of the category or categories below that best describe your experience.

You may select **MORE THAN ONE** category.

Prior to undertaking my teacher education course I was:

1. Studying at high school for my HSC (or equivalent)
2. Studying at TAFE
3. Studying a non-education degree at university
4. Employed in a part-time or casual position
5. Employed in a full-time position
6. Undertaking voluntary work
7. Undertaking child rearing or home duties
8. Looking for work
9. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

### Question 7

Please indicate your gender:      **M**                                      **F**  
    ☐     ☐

### Question 8

Please indicate your age:

21years or under	<input type="checkbox"/>
22-25 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
26-29 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 years or over	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please turn to Page 4*

## SECTION 2: INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Question 9

*This question asks you to consider how your knowledge of teaching has changed since leaving university.*

*Please place a tick across the box that most closely represents your response to each of the statements below.*

*Please note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Unsure; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.*

**As a result of my first year of teaching I now know more about:**

		<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
a.	How to manage student behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	How to relate to students positively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	How to teach students who have disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	How to teach students who are gifted and/or talented	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	How to teach students who have learning difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	How to organise my classroom into an interesting and effective learning environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	How to program efficiently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	How to plan lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	How to engage students in learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	How to manage the timing of lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	How to assess my students' learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	How to evaluate my own teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	How to improve my own teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n.	The requirements of the syllabus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***Please turn to Page 5***

### Question 10

*This question looks at the role you have been able to play in your school/s this year.*

*Please place a tick across the box that most closely represents your response to each of the statements below.*

*Please note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Unsure; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.*

#### During my first year I have been encouraged to:

	SD	D	U	A	SA
a. Discuss the progress of my students with their parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Liaise with specialist staff (eg school counsellor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Complete student reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Take part in professional development activities within school (eg school development days)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Take part in professional development activities outside school (eg run by district office)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Take responsibility for a school program (jointly or solely)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Take an active part in part in staff meeting discussions and decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Attend meeting/s of parent organisation/s	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Be a member of a school committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Exercise my own leadership skills to assist other members of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Question 11

*This question asks you to consider those who have helped you to develop as a teacher this year.*

#### During my first year, these people contributed to my development as a teacher:

	SD	D	U	A	SA
a. Other teachers on the staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Executive staff at the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Consultants employed by the department/ other employing authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Teachers from other schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Friends and/or family who are teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other _____ (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please turn to Page 6*

### Question 12

*Please indicate the methods you have chosen to assist you to reflect on and improve your teaching  
Please place a tick across the box that most closely represents your response to each of the statements below.  
Please note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Unsure; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.*

<b>In order to improve my teaching I have:</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
a. Discussed my teaching with other staff at the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Talked to my supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Engaged in critical reflection of my teaching on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Read books dealing with educational theory and/or practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Attended professional development activities after school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Attended professional development activities within school hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Talked to teachers from other schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Other _____ (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Question 13

*This question asks you to indicate some of the issues or concerns you may have met during the past year.*

**During my first year, I encountered difficulties in this area:**

	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
a. Gaining the respect of the students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Gaining support from other teaching staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Gaining support from my supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Gaining support from executive staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Gaining support from the principal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Personal financial security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Having a predictable daily program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Getting to know my students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Programming to achieve outcomes for all students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Please turn to Page 7*

### Question 13 (continued)

(Continuing: During my first year, I encountered difficulties in the following area:)

	SD	D	U	A	SA
j. Assessing student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Preparing students' reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Organising my classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Managing student discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Relating to parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Other _____ (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following questions seek your comments on how you see your career progressing next year.

### Question 14

Please place a tick in the box that most closely represents your response to each of the statements below.

Please note: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Unsure; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree.

Next year I would like to:

	SD	D	U	A	SA
a. Be employed as a permanent teacher on my own class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Be employed as a permanent teacher in any capacity (eg library, release)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be employed as a contract/temporary teacher for one term or more on my own class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be employed as a contract/temporary teacher for one term or more in any capacity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Be employed as a casual teacher on day-to-day relief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Be employed in a field other than teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Be teaching overseas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Be a student in education or other area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. (Please specify)					

*Please turn to Page 8*

**Question 15**

In my second year of teaching I would like to learn ...

---

---

---

**Question 16**

Why did you choose to become a teacher?

---

---

---

**If you would like to make any further comment on your experience as a beginning teacher please use the space below.**

***Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this survey.***

*Please return in the Reply Paid envelope supplied  
by  
Friday 14 November  
to:*

**Professor John Williamson  
Faculty of Education  
University of Tasmania  
Locked Bag 1307  
Launceston Tasmania 7250**